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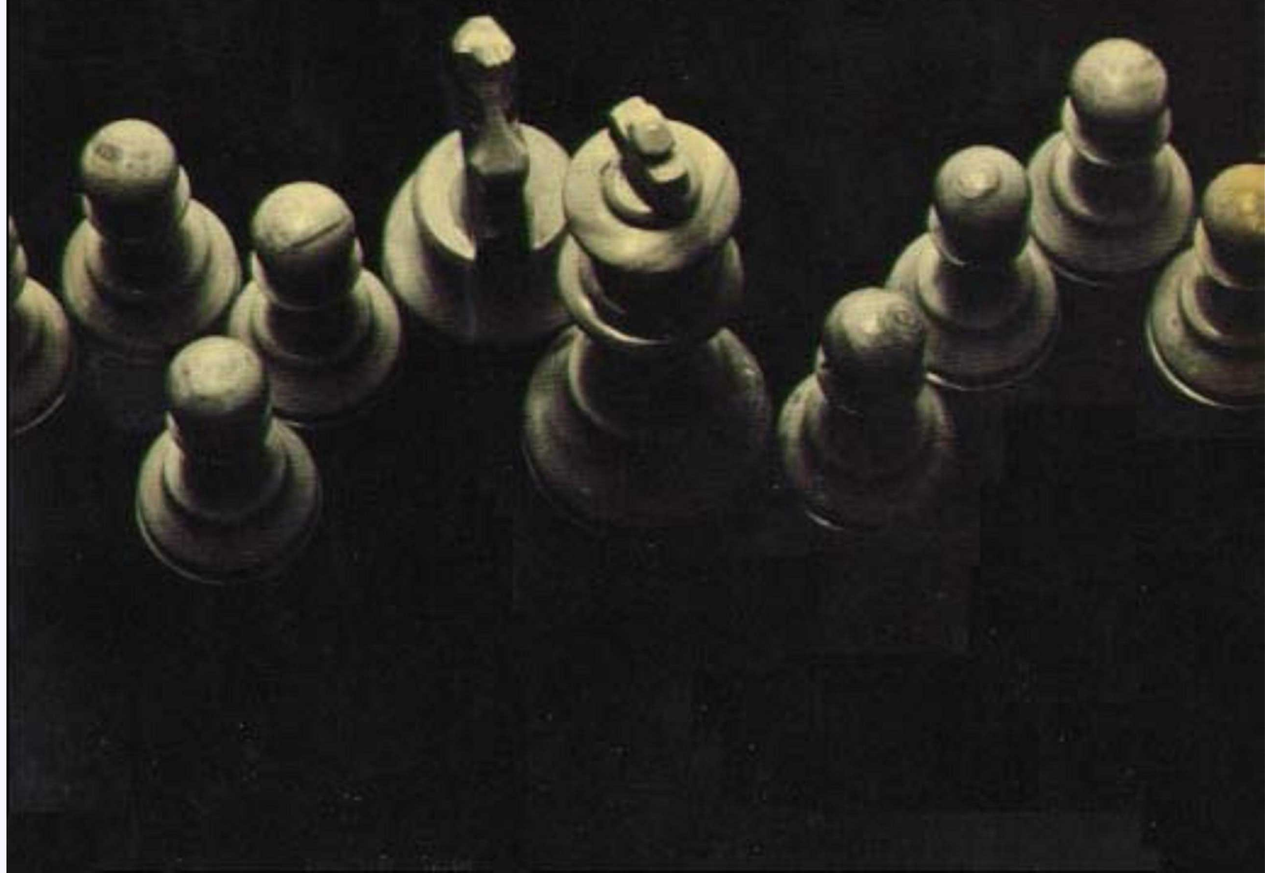

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ONE HUNDRED SELECTED GAMES

M. M. BOTVINNIK

ONE HUNDRED SELECTED GAMES

TRANSLATED BY STEPHEN GARRY

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Translator's Note

THIS translation has been made from the first edition of M. M. Botvinnik's *Selected Games* (*Izbrannie Partii*) 1926–1946, published at Leningrad in 1949; like that volume, it includes the World Champion's introductory article on the Russian and Soviet school of chess, his six studies, and his article discussing the meaning of the word "combination," as well as a table of his achievements in the various tournaments and matches he has played from 1923 down to 1948. I have added an alphabetical index of Botvinnik's opponents in these "100 games," and an index of openings. It will be noted that games 72–78 are also to be found in Botvinnik's *Championship Chess*, but in these cases the revised text of his "100 SELECTED GAMES" has invariably been followed.

I must again acknowledge my great indebtedness to Miss Eileen Tranmer for her invaluable co-operation in checking moves and suggesting textual improvements.

S. G.

FOREWORD and THE RUSSIAN AND SOVIET SCHOOL OF CHESS

Foreword

I LEARNED to play chess at the age of twelve, while attending secondary school. My brain was fresh, it could take in an unlimited amount of the information, the elementary knowledge, which is necessary to the perfection of a player's technique and to a master's creative activity at the board. On this preliminary task I had to spend four years, the period from 1923 to 1927. I won the title of Master in 1927, during the U.S.S.R. Fifth Championship tournament, held in Moscow; and one can say that this completed my first period of "chess development."

If you are going to make your mark among masters, you have to work far harder and more intensively, or, to put it more exactly, the work is far more complex than that needed to gain the title of Master. To begin with, you find yourself up against experienced, technically well-trained tournament players. And then, if your advance is swift, others play against you far more energetically.

And, thirdly, every successive step up the ladder grows more difficult.

At this stage you have to learn how to analyse and comment on games, for that enables you to criticize your own failures and successes. You have to accustom yourself to practical study at home, you have to devote time to studies, to the history of chess, the development of chess theory, of chess culture.

Finally, you have to acquire more experience and, in few words, to grow a little older.

All this took me about six years (1927–33). It must not be thought that for those six years I occupied myself solely with chess. During this period I worked my way through the Leningrad Polytechnic Institute. There is no better place for learning to work independently and to extend your horizon than in a higher school (in my view, a higher education cannot but be beneficial to a chess master, even if it is not, strictly speaking, compulsory for him).

During this second period I learned to analyse and annotate games. In addition to regular work for the periodical, *Chess Sheet* (which later became *Chess in the U.S.S.R.*) I helped in the publication of several books: *The Alekhine–Capablanca Match* (1931) and a collection of the games played in the U.S.S.R. Seventh Championship (1932). In 1934 I did the annotations for the games of my match with Flohr (published under the title of *Flohr–Botvinnik Match*).

It was roughly about the years 1930 to 1932 that I began to make a practice of winning against masters.

The next step forward is still more difficult: now you have to defeat players who are outstanding even among masters, in other words, to beat grand masters. Before I could achieve this I had to gather additional experience; beginning with 1933 the international meetings in which the Soviet masters participated were of much help in the accumulation of that experience. I had, too, to perfect my analytical powers; I wrote annotations to all the games of the return match between Alekhine and Euwe (1938), I issued a collection

of my own games (*Selected Games*, 1937) and a collection of the games of the U.S.S.R. Eleventh Championship (*U.S.S.R. Eleventh Championship*, 1939). I had to study tournament tactics in detail and to perfect my methods of preparation for tournaments.

How do I prepare?

That has never been any secret. As soon as I had mastered the technique of preparation I expounded my method in the book *Flohr–Botvinnik Match*. In addition I have read a special lecture on my methods to Leningrad first-category players, and in 1939 I published the fundamentals of those methods in the book *U.S.S.R. Eleventh Championship*.

Above all else, before playing in competitions a player must have regard to his health, for if he is suffering from ill-health he cannot hope for success. In this connection the best of all tonics is 15 to 20 days in the fresh air, in the country.

I begin my actual preparations with a review of chess literature, especially in order to acquaint myself with new and interesting games; as I read I make notes on questions which are of particular interest to me. I also study all the games played by my rivals in the forthcoming competition. I study their peculiarities of play, and their favourite opening variations; this should be especially useful when preparing for each game during the tournament.

Then I study those opening lines which I intend to apply during the contest. Here I must remark that in my view a player should not, and indeed cannot attempt to play all the openings known to theory. For one competition three or four opening systems for White and the same for Black are quite sufficient. But these systems must be prepared thoroughly. If you do not have such systems at your command you can hardly count on finishing very high in the table.

But it is also very unsatisfactory for a master to play only one opening; his opponents will be well prepared for play against him, and above all his chess horizon will be too narrow, in many positions he will simply play by rote.

So now your schemes are worked out; but even that is not enough. Certain of them—those of which you are not absolutely sure—should be tried out in training games. Of course, these games must be played with a partner who will keep them secret, otherwise all your opponents will be as well acquainted with them as you are, and all your opening preparation will be wasted.

These preparatory games must be resorted to not only in order to try out your opening schemes, but also to give you training in other respects. In particular, for a long time now I have told certain of our masters who regularly get involved in serious time-trouble how to overcome this weakness. Unfortunately, only a few masters have taken my advice, apparently, yet it is very simple. Training games must be played in which the first consideration is the clock, and not the quality of the play, or its result, and this play by the clock must be continued until making the best possible use of the time, including consideration of all the main variations, becomes a habit. I think this method would completely cure 90 per cent of those who suffer from "time-trouble sickness," and the exceptions would of course be incurable!

The same method can be used to eliminate other weaknesses; one particular weakness must be concentrated on in special training games until it is overcome. After a course of such games the master will be able to decide

on his opening repertoire for the forthcoming contest, and he will have tried it out already in practice. All that remains to do now is to prepare for each tournament game separately.

If you are weak in the endgame, you must spend more time on analysing studies; in your training games you must aim at transposing to endgames, which will help you to acquire the requisite experience. Similar methods will make good your deficiencies in middle-game play, though here the problem is more complicated.

Finally, five days or so before the contest all chess activities must be stopped completely. You must take a rest; otherwise you may lose zest for the battle.

I must mention one other possibility of achieving perfection which I myself have always tried to carry out.

What is the essence of a chess master's art? Fundamentally it consists of the ability to analyse chess positions. True, at the board you must be able to analyse very quickly and without touching the men; but in the last resort, whether you are working out the possible variations or estimating the actual position, chess is the art of analysis.

Home analysis has specific features of its own: you are not restricted by time, and you can move the men freely. Despite this difference between home analysis and practical play, there is much in common between them. It is a well known fact that almost all the outstanding chess-players have been first-class analysts.

The deduction is irresistible: anyone who wishes to become an outstanding chess-player must aim at perfection in the realm of analysis.

There is one other essential difference between analysis and practical play; during play your analytical work is continually being tested against your critically-minded opponents, but in home analysis it is very easy to be unobjective. To fight this tendency and to get away from poor analysis it is useful to publish your individual analytical work. Then you are subject to objective criticism. In other words, published analysis, or, quite simply, annotation of games for the press, is a sure method of arriving at perfection.

Of course, notes to games written "during progress," within an hour or two of play, cannot be regarded as analysis at all. Such "analysis" is purely negative, and it may easily become a bad habit.

That is all the advice I can give the player, but it is advice that I myself continually try to follow. Possibly some of my suggestions will not be of much benefit to some players; each must consider them critically and apply them with caution, taking his own individual capacities and habits into account.

This present collection contains one hundred games which I have played at various times during the period 1926 to 1946. The table of my participation in tournaments and matches (p. 269) shows that I have played altogether 578 games, not including those played in team matches; altogether I have now played over 600 games in competitions. So this book gives about a sixth of all the games I have played in my career. The games are arranged in consecutive years, and each "year" is preceded by a brief note of my chess activities in that year.

The book also contains all my six studies, and two articles, one on "The Russian and Soviet School of Chess," the other "What is a 'Combination'?"

THE RUSSIAN AND SOVIET SCHOOL OF CHESS

THE school of chess which is peculiar to the Soviet Union is deserving of thorough and serious study. Only after many articles have been written, lectures given, and discussions held shall we be in a position to formulate a scientific definition of the creative features of that school. At present we can go so far as to say that such a school does exist, and that during the past fifteen years it has defeated the foreign school.

Chess forms a small yet significant part of our culture, for to-day the people generally are taking a tremendous interest in the game. So we may well be proud that our socialist culture has conquered on this small sector.

What are the inherent qualities of our native school; what differentiates it in principle from the foreign school? In my opinion, it is the social status of the game in our country.

In the old days the general attitude to chess was that it was a "pastime," a "table-game." Even then there must have been many who recognized that chess, with its many centuries' history and culture, was rather more than a mere "table-game," but the general attitude was "amateurish" (in the worst sense of the word). Emanuel Lasker, for instance, gave up playing chess simply because he thought it more profitable to engage in business transactions. For the sake of such transactions he, the world champion, gave up chess! That may seem difficult to understand, but it is a fact. Lasker treated chess as a craft, not because he had no respect for the game, but because he was conscious of the patronizing, philanthropic attitude to chess which existed in his bourgeois milieu, and he succumbed to that attitude.

Take another outstanding player, Capablanca. In the conditions of the world he lived in he was reluctant to reveal his love of chess, he always emphasized that his main occupation was diplomacy or commerce, that he hardly ever occupied himself with chess, and only "played" when he sat down at the board.

If there was anyone among western players who took a different attitude to chess and devoted all his powers to it, it was probably Paul Morphy (1837–1884), if we are to accept his contemporaries' testimony. But we must not forget that Morphy played in competitions only during a short period of two years.

In Russia the first player to devote all his life to the game, the man who initiated the habit of adopting a profound approach to chess, was Mikhail Ivanovich Tchigorin, and we can only speak of the existence of a Russian chess school from his time onward. A. D. Petroff (1799–1867) was a strong player, but compared with Tchigorin he did not do much to create a Russian school of chess.

Tchigorin approached chess in the same manner as our modern Soviet players. He served the art disinterestedly and self-sacrificially. He had brilliant gifts and enjoyed exceptional popularity, and so in the difficult

circumstances of life in Tsarist Russia he managed to persuade the Russian players of his time and after to take an advanced view of chess.

However, it would not be strictly true to say that the Soviet masters have done no more than adopt Tchigorin's attitude to the game. Their attitude is strengthened by recognition of the fact that chess is a valuable social activity. When Tchigorin was alive only individual amateurs were attracted to it. The *Chess-Sheet* which he published had to go out of existence simply because in all Russia it was impossible to collect the 250 subscribers necessary to ensure that it should not be published at a loss.

In the Soviet Union thousands of people play chess, and the large printing of our chess periodical is sold out quickly. But even more important is that when we Soviet masters take part in tournaments and study the game we know we are performing a socially valuable, a cultural activity, that we are bringing benefit to the Soviet State. And when we take part in international contests we defend the honour of our country. So there is, of course, a difference of principle between our attitude to chess and that of Tchigorin's time.

The second great Russian master, A. Alekhine, was a disciple of Tchigorin in his supreme fidelity to chess, and so, too, were Nimzovitch and Rubinstein, who both grew up in Russia. True, in Nimzovitch there was also some straining after "originality," after "tricks" but he had Tchigorin's attitude to chess. Rubinstein also had certain characteristics of his own, for instance, his exceptional sangfroid, one might almost say fatalism, his submission to "chess fate." This, of course, had nothing in common with the active, optimistic attitude to chess displayed by the Soviet masters, and which was shared by Tchigorin and Alekhine to a large extent.

2

Mikhail Ivanovich Tchigorin (1850–1908) was unusually gifted. We must not forget that he did not learn to play chess until he was sixteen, and that for seven years after he did not play at all. In the short period from 1873 onward he covered a remarkable creative road; he first became the finest player in Russia, and then one of the strongest players, if not the second best in the world.

Tchigorin came from the people. His grandfather was a soldier, and his father a skilled workman in the Okhtensk gunpowder works. He was orphaned when still a lad, and studied at the Gatchinsk orphans' institute, afterwards being compelled to work as a petty official in Petersburg.

He grew up in difficult conditions. He played his first game in 1873, in the Petersburg Café Dominic, a chess rendezvous. Here, playing sometimes for stakes, he took his first steps. (Certain foreign chess-players still experience this unenviable lot!)

In those days there were many professional chess-players abroad, but Tchigorin was the first Russian to decide to devote all his life to chess. He did so in order to bring fame to Russian chess, to make it a national game, to persuade his contemporaries to regard it differently and to treat it as it deserved.

At the very beginning of his career Tchigorin broke with old ideas and set out to realize very great aims, aims that Soviet players especially should value. They were, to ensure the world primacy of Russian chess, and to

make it a national game; and, though he did not fully achieve either, he did a very great deal in both directions.

In order to make progress in the game, and in order to bring fame on Russian chess, he had to travel abroad and take part in international tournaments. He achieved outstanding successes. Among those successes must be reckoned his two matches with Steinitz; though he lost them both, it was not because he was lacking in talent, but because he did not possess the requisite sporting qualities, the qualities of a chess fighter. At the decisive moments of the struggle he lost the will to win, and so he went down. Yet his style of play, and the creative elements he brought to the games were so remarkable that one must consider these two matches as among the treasures of chess art.

Next one must mention his duel with Tarrasch in 1892. This match ended in a draw, but Tchigorin's achievement must be measured by the fact that at this date Tarrasch had won seven firsts in seven international tournaments. In the Hastings tournament of 1895 Tchigorin achieved a remarkable success: he took second place, being surpassed only by the young player Pillsbury, and surpassing all the other outstanding masters of the time.

Russian players always hoped that he would become the world champion. Even after he lost his two matches to Steinitz they did not lose faith in him. But when, some months later, a four-round match-tournament took place in Petersburg, Tchigorin suffered several serious defeats in the first half, and it was obvious that he could never become world champion. He was greatly disappointed.

Tchigorin played a foremost part in developing the chess movement in Russia. To him chiefly belongs the honour of organizing the first All-Russian tournament. He was always agitating for the organization of tournaments and the opening of chess clubs; he wrote a great deal on the subject, he travelled all over the country to help in the organization of clubs; and in the difficult conditions of Tsarist Russia that was an ungrateful task. Before a club could be opened great obstacles raised by the police had to be overcome, for the government was highly suspicious of all clubs of a cultural and educational nature.

The first All-Russian chess tournament took place in Russia in 1899, and of course Tchigorin was the winner. He also won the second and third All-Russian tournaments; but by then he was coming up against stronger opposition—the players of the next generation, his pupils, were coming along.

What was Tchigorin's specific contribution to theory, to chess technique?

He took his work on the *Chess Sheet* with exceptional seriousness. He published many articles and theoretical analyses; he closely followed the work of Steinitz, subjected it to a thorough check, not infrequently found mistakes, and criticized those mistakes in the pages of his periodical. He was the first chess-player in Russia to occupy himself with analytical work. Yanisch had done so before him, but his analyses were concerned only with the opening game, and not with the game as a whole.

Tchigorin was a considerable innovator in the opening game; he discovered much that was new in the Evans Gambit, the Italian Game, and the Two Knights' Defence; against the French Defence he produced his own continuation (2 Q–K2) after which one gets not the usual French Defence, but rather the King's Indian Defence with colours reversed. It was Tchigorin

who first began to play the King's Indian Defence and worked out an opening scheme for it; he brought many new ideas into the King's Gambit and Ruy Lopez.

To get any idea of Tchigorin's creative style we must realize that he frequently looked not for the rules but the exceptions. When analysing he usually tried to refute the established lines, and to introduce something of his own—an exceptionally valuable quality. Criticism of oneself and others is absolutely necessary in chess, for only the player who is critical of himself and his potential opponents can hope to achieve deep analysis and success. However, in Tchigorin this habit sometimes carried him into extremes. Thorough criticism is essential when preparing for tournaments or making analyses, but objective conclusions are vital when sitting at the board in the tournament hall.

Tchigorin's great weakness was that he did not always take his opponents' psychology into account, he was not sufficiently interested in the psychological factor in chess contests. When pursuing the strategic plans he had thought out he often went straight ahead quite unconscious of his opponent's mood, taking no account of possible danger. This explains why at decisive moments he sometimes had creative disasters, such as we have referred to in his matches against Steinitz.

Sometimes, too, Tchigorin was subjective in his attitude to analytical work. Not infrequently he did not so much attempt to establish the truth and to convey that truth to his readers as to win a battle of polemics against his opponents.

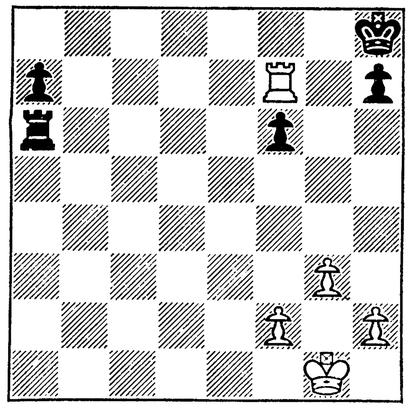
If we study his favourite openings we find that his choice is to be explained partly by his style, and partly by a spirit of contradiction, by an endeavour at all costs to violate the established canons. For instance, it had always been considered that in the Queen's Gambit the Black Knight is well posted at B3 when P–B4 has already been played. But Tchigorin revolted against such a dogma, and his defence in the Queen's Gambit violates this "rule."

This continual endeavour to introduce something new into chess and not simply to apply the well-known dogmas, this creative search for the new, the original, is characteristic of Tchigorin. It is a very difficult task, and he did not succeed, in the Queen's Gambit for instance, in completely solving the problems he himself had raised. The idea of the Tchigorin Defence in the Queen's Gambit is essentially that Black should fight with his pieces. This problem was tackled more successfully later by Nimzovitch, Réti, Ragozin, Grünfeld, and other masters.

Tchigorin's creative work in the middle and endgames was of no less importance.

When I first saw the following position (it occurs in a game between Tchigorin and Tarrasch played at Budapest in 1896) it made a tremendous impression on me. In this Rook endgame the two opponents are equal in material; on the K side White has three pawns against two, but on the Q side Black has a passed pawn. However, Black's defence is complicated by the circumstance that his King is cut off on the first rank. Looking at the position, one would find it difficult to maintain that White could get the win, but Tchigorin set out to prove that he could. We must take into account the circumstance that he had soundly estimated the latent possibilities of this position even during the middlegame, and had deliberately played for this ending.

TARRASCH



TCHIGORIN

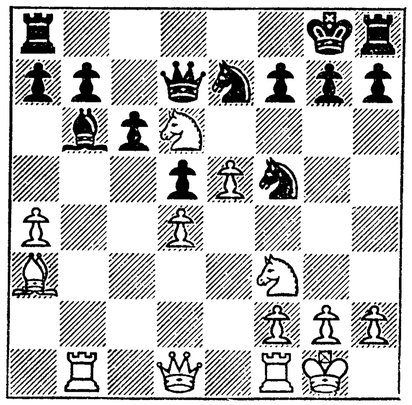
He won the game by a subtle manœuvre. Not only that, but in the final stage, when the Rook ending had left each opponent with a passed pawn, he succeeded in setting up a further interesting situation, demonstrating the strength of his passed pawn. Whenever I play a Rook ending I always remember this ending of Tchigorin's, and I would not like to find myself in the tragic situation of Tarrasch. It is highly discomfiting to lose the game when you have an equal number of pawns with your opponent, as discomfiting as it is to fail to win when playing White in a similar position.

Tchigorin was a great master of attack. He possessed superlative combinational sense, and exceptional intuition in sharp, complex positions. When he made a sacrifice he chose that variation not only because he had estimated the position exactly, but also, guided by chess intuition.

In his later years, when he was seriously ill, naturally enough he was not very successful in tournament play. But if he happened to be playing in a thematic gambit tournament, in which gambit openings are obligatory, and everything is decided by sacrifice, by attack, by counter-attack, he remained invincible to the end.

Here is a position which will be familiar to everyone. (We cannot illustrate the characteristic features and peculiarities of our native school better than by quoting well-known examples.)

STEINITZ



TCHIGORIN

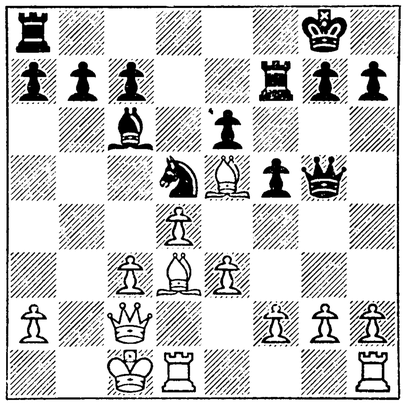
Position after Black's 18th move

In this position, taken from the first game of a Steinitz–Tchigorin match, the striking 19 Kt×BP! sacrificed a piece; but after 19 ... K×Kt; 20 P–K6 ch, K×P; 21 Kt–K5! the Black King found itself in the middle of the board. By sacrificing a Knight without compensation and forcing the Black King to move into the centre Tchigorin laid it bare to attack. Since then it has been proved that Tchigorin's combination was thoroughly sound. Of course, strictly speaking this is not to be called a combination, as the sacrifice is not based on exact calculation, but arises from an appreciation of general principles. But undoubtedly it was a beautiful sacrifice; and you will find many such in Tchigorin.

Later, Lasker proved that this position could lead to a win by a different, quieter road; but the imaginative method Tchigorin chose was characteristic of him. It was a style which won him great popularity among chess players all over the world.

The next position is of great interest; it witnesses to Tchigorin's outstanding ability in counter-attack. It is interesting, too, because of the fact that no one had previously obtained such a position for Black from the Queen's Gambit. If we did not know that the position arose in one of Tchigorin's games we might well conclude that Black had been played by some modern master, by Ragozin, say; and I certainly would not mind playing Black in such a position. It arose in a game between Tchigorin and Teichman at Cambridge-Springs, in 1904.

TCHIGORIN



TEICHMAN

Position after White's 14th move

With the move 15 ... P–Kt4! Black had his central Knight entrenched at Q4. It is to be noted that some twenty-five years later Grand Master Nimzovitch also entrenched his Knight in the centre in analogous positions (with the aid of the two pawns at QKt4 and KB4). The position appears to be double-edged, as after 16 KR–Kt1 there is a threat of 17 P–Kt4, opening the Kt file and launching an attack on the Black King. The basic weakness of White's position is the "strong" posting of his Bishop at K5, even though it is evident that White pinned all his hopes to it! For at K5 the Bishop is badly placed, as it cannot share in the defence of its King when Black begins an energetic counter-attack. Only four moves were necessary:

16 . . . Q–K2; 17 QR–B1, Q–R6 ch; 18 K–Q2, P–Kt5!; 19 P–QB4, B–R5; and Black's attack was now irresistible.

I like this position even better than the previous one. It is a position of our own day. Although chess technique has made great strides, modern masters would not be ashamed to play such a game; on the contrary, they would be proud. Yet Tchigorin played it forty-five years ago!

Thus, summing up our analysis of Tchigorin's creative powers, we can say that he was one of the greatest of Russian players, an artist of chess thought, and perhaps the first player in the world to treat the game as it deserves. He did a great deal for the development of chess in Russia and had a very powerful influence on world chess thought.

He was many years in advance of his time, and his work will always be an inexhaustible source for the development and perfection of chess ideas.

3

After Tchigorin the next greatest Russian chess player was Alexander Alekhine (1892–1946). His play exhibited a harmonious combination of talent, character, physical powers, and preparation. I think it is these qualities that determine a chess player's success. I must add that by physical powers I mean first and foremost the strength of the nervous system, as, of course, during a tournament it is the player's brain that functions.

As a chess master Alekhine had great strength of character. True, he had his weaknesses and vagaries, but he knew how to fight and overcome them. For instance, prior to his match with Capablanca in 1927 he was a heavy smoker. We all know what it means for a smoker to give up smoking; none the less, in order to feel physically fitter, to improve his form, Alekhine gave it up. And in that match with Capablanca he played perhaps better than ever before.

Grand Master Flohr knew Alekhine well, and he has told that during the years roughly 1930 to 1934, no matter where Alekhine was, in a café, at a concert, or even in a hotel hall, he always and everywhere took out his pocket set and analysed, searched, searched for something new.

He became world champion, and was a professional in the high, creative sense of the word; in his lifetime he probably played as many games as Lasker and Capablanca put together![1]

He had a very rare and clear combinative vision, and his creative work developed the Tchigorin ideas still further. I know of no other player who had such insight into combinational play. But what exactly is the essence of a chess combination?

I published my views on the meaning of "combination" as long ago as 1939, in the periodical *Chess in the U.S.S.R.* (Shakhmat *v.* S.S.S.R.)[2]. And as ten years have passed without anyone making any convincing objections to those views, I may assume that my definition of the term "combination" has been accepted.

From his very first steps in the game the chess player learns to think in terms of the normal relative values of the various chessmen. He is told, and discovers, that a Rook is stronger than a Knight, a Bishop is approximately

[1] Lasker, 504 games; Capablanca, 578; Alekhine, 1076, Vide *N. Statesman* Nov. 4 1950; p. 410. S.G.

[2] What is a 'Combination'? p. 266.

equal to three pawns, while a Bishop and two pawns are approximately equal to a Rook, a Queen is stronger than a Rook, and so on. However, positions arise in which these relative values no longer apply; times when, for instance, a Queen is weaker than a pawn.

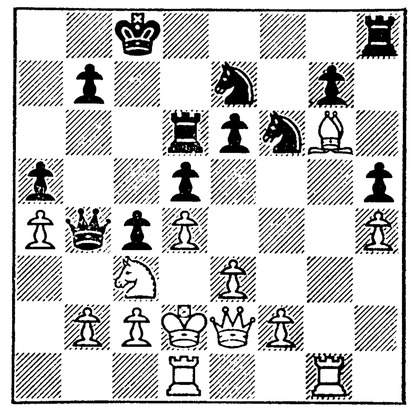
The player's greatest art consists in exploring the possibilities of bringing the game to a position in which the normal relative values cease to operate.

One cannot arrive at such a critical position by way of simple, superficial moves. The road lies through sacrifice, and, on the other hand, the return to normal relations also lies through sacrifice. Frequently both roads, outward and return, are united in a single move, and then we have a one-move combination.

Alekhine had an extraordinary, penetrating insight into sacrifices which lead forcedly to such situations, to positions in which the normal relations no longer apply; and he saw them instantaneously.

Here, for instance, is a position from a game he played against Nimzovitch, in 1912.

ALEKHINE



NIMZOVITCH

Position after White's 20th move

In this position Alekhine moved 20 . . . R–Kt3, laying a well-concealed trap for his opponent. The move seems to hold out no threat at all. For instance, after 21 . . . Kt×B; 22 R×Kt, Black cannot play 22 . . . Q×KtP, for White replies 23 R–QKt1, and appears to have won the Rook. But in reality 22 . . . Q×KtP is a sacrifice which leads to a position in which the ordinary relative values cease to apply. If White plays 23 R–QKt1, then 23 . . . Q×Kt ch! (a further sacrifice!); 24 K×Q, Kt–K5, and mate.

Thus the second sacrifice led to a mate, in other words, back to the "ordinary conceptions" of the chessboard. Unfortunately, this fine variation did not actually come to pass in the game.

Three phases can be noted in the development of Alekhine's creative powers.

The first phase was marked by the acquisition of experience and the development of his combinative vision. The combination involving a Rook and Queen sacrifice, which we have just considered, is characteristic of this phase.

With his gifts and strength of character he swiftly won notable successes,

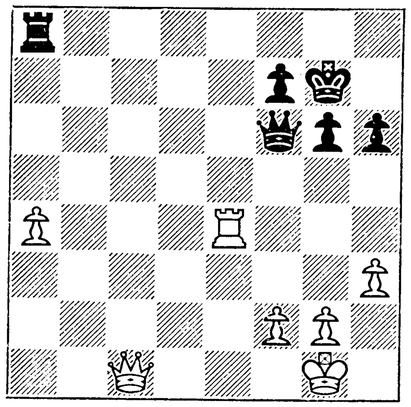
and soon became the third best player in the world. Now he had to achieve the final step. But in his path to the title of world champion stood two intelligent, experienced and talented players: Lasker and Capablanca. As a fighter, as a player, Lasker had the more subtle, intelligent, crafty style; but Capablanca had the greater talent.

Alekhine set himself the task of surpassing both these great chess players. And he succeeded. In 1921 Capablanca defeated Lasker, so now Alekhine had to defeat Capablanca. If he was to excel the Cuban player he must assimilate all the new elements that Lasker and Capablanca had introduced into chess technique. Lasker had brought the art of playing in simple positions to great perfection. Capablanca was fond of playing more complicated games, he was a master of the middle-game; but in the later period of his career he, too, was attracted by simple positions.

If Alekhine had not succeeded in assimilating their art and technique, especially in simple positions, he could not have beaten Capablanca.

Here is a position from the 34th and last game of their match.

CAPABLANCA



ALEKHINE

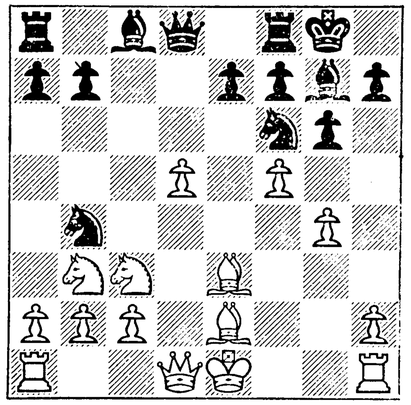
Alekhine had an extra pawn, but the extremely limited material made a win by no means easy. However, he was able to pull off this very difficult endgame. Even earlier in the game, when White was still without the extra pawn, a slip by Capablanca (later pointed out only by Lasker) enabled Alekhine to exploit subtly a slight positional superiority, and so to transpose to this endgame and victory.

This was essentially the second phase of Alekhine's development; it consisted in mastering a classic style, and the art of playing in simple positions. His defeat of Capablanca to win the world championship in 1927 was a perfectly logical outcome.

During these same years he also mastered the technique of preparing for contests. I make no bones of the fact that when my turn came to prepare for the world championship contest my first step was to make close and detailed acquaintance with Alekhine's introductory article to his collection of games of the New York 1927 Match-Tournament. In this article he related how he had prepared for the match against Capablanca, subjected Capablanca's creative art to thorough analysis, and revealed his own thoughts, his own plans.

At the board Alekhine was so direct that, as he thought out some combination, he was unable to restrain his feelings. When the position was complex, after making his move he would get up and start circling round and round the table like a kite. During the Nottingham Tournament of 1936 I myself had to endure some difficult moments in a game against Alekhine. This game reveals how thoroughly he prepared for playing in tournaments.[1]

BOTVINNIK



ALEKHINE

Position after Black's 12th move

It was general knowledge that I had played this variation of the Sicilian Defence against Levenfish three months before the Nottingham tournament, and it was regarded as being favourable to Black. So at first I could not understand why Alekhine was playing this opening. But when the position as shown arose I guessed from his expression that he had something up his sleeve, was preparing some combination. And I was right. He had prepared the manœuvre: 13 P–Q6!.

Not every master would spot this move, for the pawn sacrifice is completely unexpected; its idea is to weaken Black's KB3 square. I managed to "wriggle out" of this unpleasant position, though not without suffering some nasty moments. At the critical point, in my search for escape I had to spend some 20 minutes in thought, and all that time Alekhine circled round and round our table. Summoning all my will power, I managed to free myself of this strong "psychological" pressure and find a way out of the trap.

During his first and second periods Alekhine always sought for the truth in the game; but in his last period (1934–46) his play was characterized by a new, and one might say a Lasker-manner of approach to chess. During these years he did not so much attempt to penetrate into the secret of a position as to seek a convenient moment when, without blundering, he could shatter his opponent with the combinative weapon, even in positions where the prerequisites were lacking. The fourteenth game of his match against Euwe, in 1937, is characteristic in this respect.

Absorbed in the attack, Alekhine played 17 Q–Kt5. Now he risked losing the Bishop at R6, as its retreat was cut off. The game went: 17 ... Kt–K1; 18 QR–Kt1, Kt–B4. By this move Euwe was hoping to avoid complications, but he hoped in vain. If he had played 18 ... Kt–Kt3 he would have had

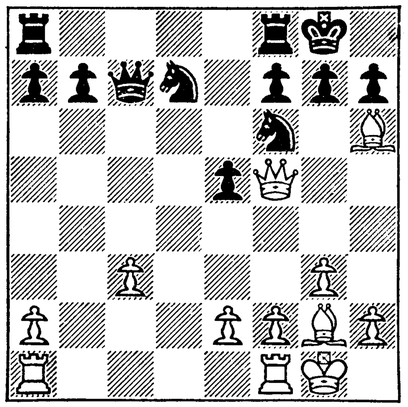
[1] See Game No. 53, p. 140, *infra*.

the better game. (I have given this variation in detail in my book *Return Match Alekhine–Euwe*.)

So Alekhine's tactic against the Dutch grand master was justified, and he seized the initiative. But in the very same game, five or six moves later, he unjustifiably played for further complications, and he should have lost. Evidently Alekhine knew his opponent: Euwe was again entangled in the complications that arose, and suffered defeat.

Of course, such an approach to the art of chess cannot satisfy Soviet masters.

EUWE



ALEKHINE

Position after Black's 16th move

Alekhine also achieved outstanding success as a writer on the game, as an analyst, and commentator. His most important works have all been published in the U.S.S.R.: his collections of the International tournament games at New York in 1927, and his "best games," gathered into two volumes. These are first-rate, fundamental works which everyone seriously interested in the art of chess must study closely.

Summing up Alekhine's characteristic features as a chess player, one must specify first and foremost his exceptional fighting qualities, his profound psychological insight into the essence of the chess art, and his phenomenal combinative vision, which was a reflection of the specific features of the Soviet school of chess.

At the same time I must again emphasize that during the last period of his career his imaginative powers declined.

4

We turn to the Soviet period of chess development.

Young Soviet players have always had a broad road open to them in their advance towards perfection. Chess clubs, chess circles in schools, factories and works, in collective farms, government and public institutions, have always opened unlimited opportunities for creative development. If a young player looks at all promising special care and attention is given to him. For instance, in Leningrad the twelve-year old first category player, Boris Spassky, has proved outstanding. And this young player is surrounded with

all the care of the community and has every opportunity of studying at school while developing his talent for chess. This is a feature exclusive to our socialist country.

I think what is at the bottom of it all is not only the favourable conditions in which our chess talents develop. It also derives from that special attention to the game which is a characteristic of Soviet players. We highly appreciate the opportunities afforded us by our State, our government, our Bolshevik party. We recognize our responsibilities, and so never before has chess been studied so seriously, or played so energetically as our Soviet masters now play and study. For us it is a creative life in itself. And so we achieve good results.

The representatives of the older generation of Soviet masters, players like Romanovsky, Levenfish, Ilyin-Zhenevsky, Nenarokov, Rabinovich, and Grigoriev, have played a great part in passing on the experience of the Tchigorin school to our young masters. Troitsky and Kubbel also did much to form our artistic tastes.

What creative features have Soviet players inherited from such outstanding masters as Tchigorin and Alekhine? To avoid being misunderstood I must add that we have of course studied the creative art of such masters as Nimzovitch and Rubinstein, Lasker and Capablanca, to mention only a few; but the two men who have had the greatest influence on the development of the Soviet school are Tchigorin and Alekhine.

From Tchigorin we took over a number of opening ideas, and in our own day the Soviet players are popularizing these openings all over the chess world.

From Tchigorin also we inherited a fine technique; in this respect we still learn and shall go on learning from him. And we have inherited his passion for the initiative. All sorts of people play chess, some more actively, others more passively; but for some reason you never find any completely "passive" players among Soviet masters. In the main we aim at the initiative, at attack, and, in our defence, at counter-attack.

In an article by Grand Master Levenfish, devoted to an appreciation of my creative play, he adduced the fact that I avoid quiet positions as a defect of my game. Well, I have to admit that I do avoid such positions. Moreover, I think this is perfectly logical, and inherent in the style of Soviet players, just as it was in Tchigorin's and Alekhine's style. Naturally, on occasions when passive defence is the only right way, Soviet players do not avoid such systems. But in our preparation for the game, in setting ourselves definite creative objectives, in our creation of works of art at the board, we think first and foremost of the initiative, the attack, the counter-attack, and not of passive defence.

From Alekhine our modern players have inherited his fighting qualities. I doubt whether any other master could boast of such a large number of games won at the decisive moment as Alekhine. From him we can learn the psychological approach to the game and, possibly, creative self-criticism too, though in this respect Soviet masters have left him behind. And finally, and chiefly, we try to develop his combinative vision. To achieve this we resort to a number of methods all of which have as basis the striving for perfection in analysis and the acquisition of extensive experience of struggle in sharp, complicated positions.

Among the active qualities possessed by Soviet masters I must include the

working out of methods of preparation. As I have already remarked, Lasker and Alekhine both had their own methods of preparation, but they were never made public. In the Soviet Union the system of preparation which has been worked out is public property, and I think it can be said that the majority of Soviet masters adopt it when preparing for contests.

The basis of the system is opening preparation, sporting training, the intelligent elimination of creative weaknesses; we must also include questions connected with the atmosphere and conduct of the tournament.

What are the principles of our school? First and foremost I must mention our scientific approach to chess. This implies a realistic attitude to the game and a critical attitude to one's own creative work. This has been exalted into a principle. And so Soviet masters are continually seeking something new, continually exploring new roads in the realm of chess theory and practice. For instance, certain masters of the past days played the same openings year after year; but we approach the problem differently. When we study some opening system, when we evolve a "new production technique," we make use of the system only so long as it brings advantage, and then we scrap it and renew the search for a fresh "weapon."

As a classic example of this creative approach to chess play we can instance the system worked out by Grand Master Boleslavsky in the open variation of the Ruy Lopez associated with 9 ... B–QB4. When I brought out this ancient move from the archives in 1941 Boleslavsky studied it and went on to prove that in this variation the well-known Queen sacrifice was advantageous to White, and not to Black, as many foreign authorities had considered. In 1942, playing this variation, he won a game against Ragozin in the Moscow Championship.[1]

The systems worked out by Soviet masters are so deep, and they depart so far from the established canons, that at first sight it might seem that they can be refuted easily enough. And so we are able to go on playing such systems again and again, for they prove to have more life than was conceded them.

In fact, though I had spent a fortnight in study of Boleslavsky's variation I all but lost to him at Sverdlovsk in 1943, when I risked playing this variation for Black.

Another characteristic of Soviet masters is their swift publication of a successful experiment. Grand Master Smyslov's victory over Reshevsky in the first game of the Wireless Match between U.S.S.R. and U.S.A. in 1945 was partly due to the circumstance that the American grand master was not acquainted with the analysis work of Soviet masters. It is interesting to note that Smyslov spent less than six minutes on the first 25 moves of the game, whereas by then Reshevsky was already in serious time trouble. It is true that after further research, checked in a number of games played by correspondence, it transpired that after all Boleslavsky's system was not so dangerous for Black. But now he has proposed a new move: 17 R–KB2, confronting Black with new tasks.

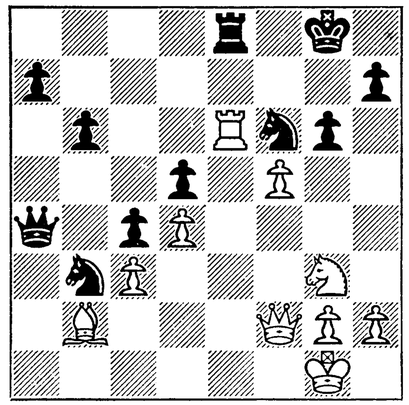
In no other chess school has the opening technique been so finely perfected as among Soviet players. In 1935 I succeeded in winning a game against

[1] For more detailed consideration of the Boleslavsky innovation, see *Championship Chess* (MacGibbon & Kee Ltd., London, Bell Publishing Co., U.S.A. 1950), p. 10. S.G.

Grand Master Spielman in eleven moves, though he had "specially prepared" a variation of the Caro-Kann Defence for this meeting with me.[1]

One thoroughly prepared system determining not only the development of the opening but also the nature of the middle-game is the one I used against Capablanca during the Avro–Amsterdam tournament of 1938.[2]

CAPABLANCA



BOTVINNIK

Position after White's 26th move

White dominates the centre and the K side. Black has superiority on the Q side, but his Knight at QKt6 is cut off from the main "theatre of war." In this game, after 26 ... R×R; 27 P×R, K–Kt2; 28 Q–B4, Q–K1; 29 Q—K5, White had an invincible attack.

It has to be added that the position which arose in the middle-game was not fortuitous; it was the logical consequence of a well thought out opening system.

In the following years this system was adopted in games between Reshevsky and Fine (1941), Botvinnik and Alexander (1946), Euwe and Denker (1946), Tolush and Keres (1946), Reshevsky and Steiner (1946), and others. Even so, the system still needs to be studied and further tested in practice.

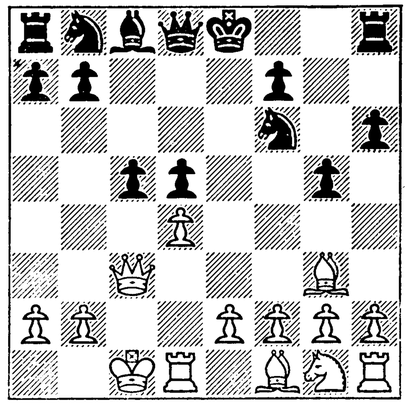
Now I must refer to one very successful example of opening preparation. In Moscow in 1940 Mikenas, playing White, defeated me in a sharp variation of the Nimzo-Indian Defence. Theoretical studies were started at once, and the Moscow master Simagin found an almost sound method of play for Black. I too found a sound method, and it seems that Keres also gave much study to the variation. Here was "collective" creative work, though, obviously, not in perfect accord, as each of us prepared his analysis in secret from the others.

The following position arose in a game I played against Keres at Leningrad in 1941;[3] the play went: 10 ... P×P (opening the B file for a frontal attack on the White King); 11 Q×P, Kt–B3; 12 Q–QR4, B–B4 (outflanking the White King; now White has no satisfactory defence). Thus it needed only three or four moves to clear up the position, yet before this game "theoreticians" had regarded the given variation as being in White's favour!

[1] Game 41, p. 116, *infra*.
[2] Game 59, p. 154, *infra*.
[3] Game No. 73, p. 190, *infra*.

There are positions in which it is more difficult to find the first move than in other instances to calculate a forced variation for ten to fifteen moves ahead. The application of such an opening system as that in my game against Keres can lead to excellent results.

BOTVINNIK



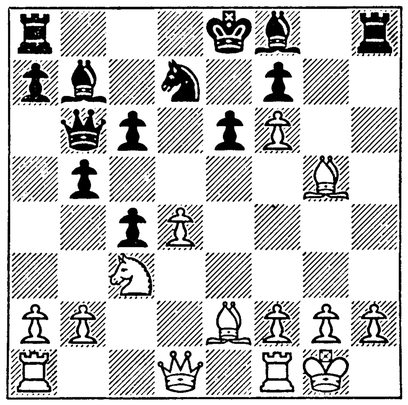
KERES

Position after White's 10th move

Unfortunately, in this case the continuation has been applied in only the one game; it was so convincing that no one since has dared to play this variation, though perhaps that attitude is not altogether justified.

The next example we shall consider is characteristic. One must assume that it is along this line that Soviet masters will develop their creative play. It must be clearly understood that Soviet players do not seek simple systems in the opening, but try to formulate opening systems in which everything is complicated, distinctive, or new. That, of course, is not by any means the same as purposeless striving for originality.

BOTVINNIK



DENKER

Position after White's 13th move

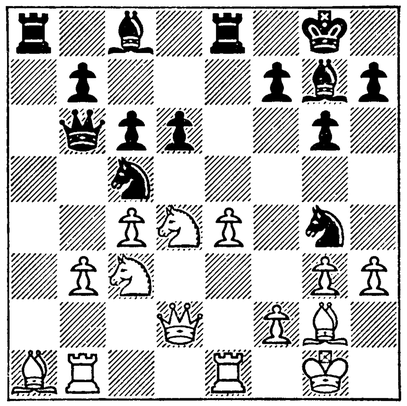
What will help the player to orientate in the conditions of the complicated middle-game which arises as the result of the modern opening systems?

To begin with, thorough preparation (in which training games play by no means the least part); secondly, a positional sense. However, by this I do not mean the "classic" positional sense which was based on understanding of "general" principles, but a sense based on the sound estimate of actual positions, functioning in the process of intelligent preparation.

The foregoing position, taken from my game against Denker in the U.S.S.R.–U.S.A. Radio Match, 1945,[1] seems quite fantastic; almost all Black's K-side is destroyed, he has no pawn centre, he is a pawn down, and his King arouses serious anxiety.

Yet in reality the Black King finds a secure haven on the Q side, while White's central pawn at Q4 is a convenient object to attack and, with the continuation P—QB4 at the right moment, Black opens the diagonals for his Bishops, after which it is the White King's position that is hopeless. White's material superiority is not of great importance, for the endgame is still a long way off. When this position arose in the game many masters considered Black's situation very difficult; yet within five moves it was obvious that White's position was hopeless, though superfically it seemed that Denker had not made one mistake.

BRONSTEIN



ZITA

Position after White's 17th move

Above is another position of some interest; it arose out of a King's Indian Defence opening. I recall that Tchigorin was the first to play this opening, but it is the Soviet players who have succeeded in raising this defence to the level of a real opening system, in the modern conception of the word. Our masters have done a great deal of theoretical work on the King's Indian Defence, and of recent years many games have been played with this opening.

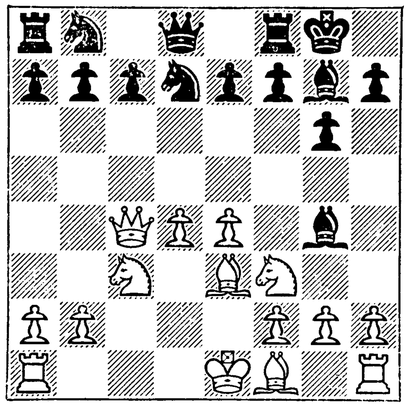
In the game from which this position is taken (Zita–Bronstein, Moscow–Prague, 1946), Black's initiative soon grew threatening. Here, too, Black has no pawn centre, but this is completely offset by the happy interaction of the Black pieces. The stroke 17 ... R×B!; 18 R×R, followed by 18 ... Kt×BP! (White cannot play either 19 K×Kt, Kt×KtP, or 19 Q×Kt, Kt–Q6!) swiftly brought White to disaster.

[1] Game No. 93, p. 238, *infra*.

It is interesting to note that Bronstein also won against L. Pachmann with a similar combination, in the same match (Moscow–Prague, 1946).

Finally, here is a position of which Tchigorin might have dreamed. It is taken from an Euwe–Smyslov game, played at Moscow in 1948.

SMYSLOV



EUWE

Position after Black's 8th move

Black's last move was 8 ... Kt–Q2; in other words, without completing the mobilization of his forces Black begins certain "queer" manœuvres with a piece already developed. Note that White has an "ideal" pawn centre, and he can bring all his pieces into play quite easily; not only that, but Black will have to part with his Queen's Bishop and yield the two-Bishop advantage to White. And yet Black's position is extremely viable, and he is ready for active operations directed against White's pawn centre.

Why was it that in this case the established positional canons proved unrealistic? The whole point was that White had to devote time to occupying his centre with pawns; this circumstance, and also the White Queen's advanced position, enabled Black to gain the decisive tempo for developing a counter-initiative!

Many masters have been critical of this system, but practice is the criterion of the truth. Grand Master Smyslov has played many games with the variation, and I think the system has become part of chess practice for many years to come. It forced us to resurvey and re-estimate the conceptions which seemed to have been established concerning the principles of positional struggle.

5

The contest between Soviet chess and foreign chess has been a historic rivalry. As late as 1933 Grand Master Flohr, who in those days represented Czechoslovakia and was the closest challenger for the world championship title, arrived in the Soviet Union rather as an examiner, to check up on the powers of Soviet players. At that time the West had such outstanding masters as Lasker, Capablanca, Alekhine, Rubinstein, and Nimzovitch, and there was a rather sceptical attitude abroad to Soviet masters. Yet it was in 1933 that the young Soviet chess school passed its first international examination.

Never have we had such a number of grand masters and talented youngsters in the Soviet Union as there are to-day. In former days Soviet masters learned from the outstanding foreign grand masters (learning is always a necessary process, and we shall not hesitate to learn from foreign masters in the future also, if their creative work provides anything worthy of study). But now the situation is reversed; foreign masters dream of coming to Moscow in order to meet Soviet players; they subject our chess publications, the games of Soviet tournaments, and our opening systems to close study. When Soviet masters travel abroad they discover that their creative work is thoroughly studied there and is quite well known.

And so in a short period of fifteen years Soviet chess players have changed from "pupils" into teachers. But we must not be satisfied with what we have achieved, we must not get conceited. We must devote all our powers to the development of a mass chess art, to increasing the network of clubs as swiftly as possible, to the publication of new chess books and strengthening the Soviet chess organizations generally.

We must go on developing chess throughout the length and breadth of our land, with the object of making many more workers both in town and country acquainted with the game. And our finest masters must play even better and create further artistic values.

ONE HUNDRED GAMES

NINETEEN TWENTY-SIX

At the beginning of 1926 I was not exactly a novitiate in the chess world; on the other hand, my two years' tournament experience could not be called extensive.

I managed to achieve reasonably good results in the semi-finals of the Leningrad City Championship, in which players of the first category took part.

To reach the championship final one had to take "absolute" first place in the qualifying tournament. In this tournament I drew one game and steadily won the others, and so for some time I occupied second place, as my rival, a first category player, had won all his games. My deciding game with him lasted some thirteen hours, and ended in his defeat. So I managed to get into the Leningrad Championship.

In the championship itself, "through the inertia" of others, I began well and won the first five games. But, after losing to Master I. Rabinovich, I shared second and third places with him. The Master A. Ilyin-Zhenevsky was first, half a point ahead of us.

In the autumn of 1926 a scratch team from the Leningrad Trade Unions went to Sweden to play a match with a scratch team from Stockholm. In this Leningrad–Stockholm match I had the opportunity of meeting G. Stoltz, to-day an experienced international master. At that time Stoltz was only one of many talented young chess-players, but even so the Swedes were surprised when my first game with him ended in a draw, while in the second I defeated him (see game No. 1).

The result of the match was $12\frac{1}{2}$ to $11\frac{1}{2}$ in Leningrad's favour.

In this same year, 1926, I began to collaborate in the paper *Chess News* (*Shakhmatny Listok*). I was invited by one of the paper's organizers, Weinstein, to annotate several games.

LENINGRAD–STOCKHOLM MATCH

November

No. 1. *Queen's Gambit Declined*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*G. Stoltz* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	Kt–KB3
4 B–Kt5	B–K2
5 P–K3	O–O
6 Kt–B3	P–QKt3

Capablanca frequently resorted to this defence (with the preliminary 6 ..., P–KR3; and he was followed by Tartakower, Makogonov, and Bondarevsky. I knew it was customary to reply with 7 P×P, but in those days my chief aim in the opening was to develop my pieces.

7 R–B1	B–Kt2
8 B–Q3	QKt–Q2
9 O–O	Kt–K5

Another course for Black would have been 9 ..., P–B4; 10 Q–K2, BP×P; 11 KP×P, P×P; 12 B×P, so isolating the Q-pawn. The course chosen by Stoltz seems more natural.

White made his next move without stopping to think. Now perhaps I would prefer 10 B–B4, avoiding simplification and causing Black difficulties with the threat of 11 P×P, P×P; 12 B×P, Q×B; 13 Kt×Kt.

10 B×B	Q×B
11 P×P	P×P
12 Kt×Kt	

A combinative miscalculation. True, Black already has a good game, as P–KB4 cannot be prevented, e.g. 12 B–Kt1, P–KB4; 13 Kt×Kt, BP×Kt; 14 R×P, P×Kt; 15 R×B, Q–Kt4; 16 P–KKt3, Q–Kt5; 17 K–R1, R–B3; 18 R–Kt1, R–R3; 19 Q–KB1, R–R6.

12 ...	P×Kt
13 R×P	B–B1

When I decided on the combination I thought Black would continue 13 ..., B–Q4; or 13 ..., R–Kt1. In both cases White wins with 14 Kt–K5. I overlooked the simple but strong move Stoltz made.

14 B–Kt5

I thought this the best chance; but in reality the correct move is 14 B–K2!, Q–Q3; 15 Q–B1, P×Kt; 16 B×P, B–R3; 17 B×R, B×R; 18 R×P, winning a third pawn for the Knight.

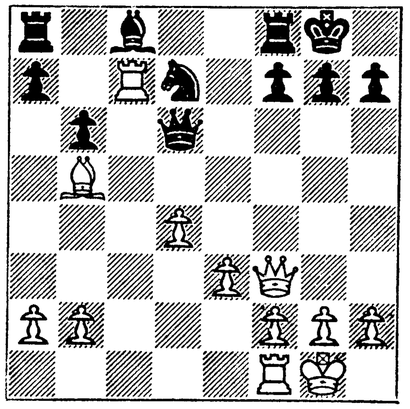
14 ...	P×Kt

Black throws away all his advantage. He should have played 14 ..., Q–Q1; 15 R×B, R×R; winning the exchange.

15 Q×P	Q–Q3

An attractive move, but after it Black has a lost game. 15 ..., R–Kt1, would have been better, though even so, after 16 Q–B6, R–Q1; 17 R×P, White has three pawns for the piece and exerts strong pressure.

Position after Black's 15th move



16 Q–QB6!	Q–Kt5

Black finds an ingenious defence. If 16 ..., Q×Q; 17 B×Q, and White recaptures, keeping two extra pawns.

17 Q×R	B–R3

The whole point! If 18 Q–Q5, 18 ..., Kt–B3; and 19 ..., B×B. However, Black is not destined to realize his intentions.

18 Q×R! ch	Kt×Q
19 B×B	P–R4

Black is helpless, condemned to passive defence.

20 R×RP	Q×KtP
21 B–B4	Kt–K3
22 B–Kt3	P–R5
23 P–Q5	Kt–Q1

If 23 ..., Kt–B4; 24 P–Q6, Kt×B; R–R8 ch, and 26 P–Q7.

24 R–Q7	Q–B3
25 P–KR3	P–QKt4
26 P–K4	K–R2
27 P–K5	Q–QKt3
28 R–K1	P–Kt5
29 P–K6	P×P
30 P×P	Kt×P
31 R×Kt	

And a few moves later Black resigned.

NINETEEN TWENTY-SEVEN

I STUDIED hard all the winter, as I was due to finish school in the spring. A scratch team from Moscow arrived in Leningrad for the May-day celebrations. In the Leningrad–Moscow match I had to play against N. Grigoriev, an experienced chess-player who had taken part in U.S.S.R. championships. I succeeded in winning the first game (see Game No. 2) and put up a stubborn defence to draw the second.

A month or so later I left school, and applied for permission to sit in a competitive examination for entry to a higher school, but was not successful. I was not yet 16, and one had to be "turned 17." I had to reconcile myself to the idea of losing a whole school year, but on the other hand, to having more time for chess! In the summer I took part in the Leningrad tournament of Six, against very strong competition. I was defeated by the Master P. Romanovsky, and took second place to his first.

The first big tournament in which I took part was the U.S.S.R. Championship played off in Moscow in 1927.

I took part in this championship rather by accident, as I was only one of the candidates for participation; but I was fortunate, as some of those chosen to play in the actual championship declined to take part.

My game with V. Ragozin (No. 3) may give the reader some idea of how far I was really prepared for participation in the U.S.S.R. Championship.

Twenty-one players took part. It was a very hard tournament for me, with my little experience. I lost four games, but even so I surpassed the standard demanded of a master by 2½ points, sharing fifth and sixth place.

On 20th October, 1927, I won my game with Y. Rochlin, which brought me one point above the master standard. So a group of Leningrad players (among them, if I remember aright, being A. Model, A. Perfiliev, and V. Alatortsev), took me into the next hall (the tournament was being held in the House of the Trade Unions) and celebrated the occasion by throwing me up to the ceiling. That was the traditional ceremony of "initiation" as a master.

The three games I played against I. Rabinovich, V. Nenarokov, and A. Ilyin-Zhenevsky (Nos. 4, 5, 6) in this championship were probably my best in the tournament.

LENINGRAD–MOSCOW MATCH

May

No. 2. *Queen's Indian Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*N. Grigoriev* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–KB3	P–QKt3
4 P–KKt3	B–Kt2
5 B–Kt2	B–Kt5 ch
6 B–Q2	B×B ch
7 Q×B	O–O
8 O–O	P–Q3
9 Q–B2	

This variation is often met with in tournaments. In those days I always played 3 Kt–KB3 and studied the continuations arising from this move in all their finesses.

If White plays at once 9 Kt–B3; 9 ..., Kt–K5 follows, and Black has obstructed the White KP. But after 9 Q–B2; 9 ..., B–K5 is followed by 10 Q–Kt3 and 11 Kt–QB3.

9 ...	QKt–Q2
10 Kt–B3	Q–K2
11 P–K4	P–K4
12 QR–Q1	P–Kt3

Black protects B4 from occupation by the Knight, and prepares the later advance of his BP.

13 KR–K1	P–B3

Necessary. True, it greatly reduces the Bishop's scope, but it completely eliminates the constant threat of Kt–Q5.

14 P–Kt3	Kt–K1
15 Q–Q2	R–Q1
16 B–R3	P–B3
17 Q–R6	

Attracted by a little trap: 17 ..., Q–Kt2; 18 Q×Q ch, Kt×Q; 19 B×Kt, R×B; 20 P×P, winning a pawn, White is not up to the mark. The right plan is 17 Kt–R4, followed by P–B4, and White would have real advantage.

17 ...	Kt–QB2
18 Kt–KR4	R–B2

Black should have continued: 18 ..., Kt–K3, forcing B×Kt ch. For then 19 P–Q5 is followed not by 19 ..., Kt–Q5 (20 Kt–K2!) but by 19 ..., Kt–Kt4! hemming in the White Queen.

19 P–Q5	

Not 19 P–B4, P×QP!; 20 R×P, P–Q4.

19 ...	P×P
20 Kt×QP	B×Kt

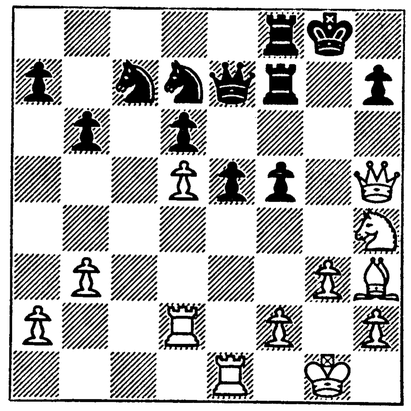
The only way! If 20 ..., Kt×Kt; 21 BP×Kt, Kt–B1; 22 R–QB1, and White has a won position.

21 BP×B	R(Q)–KB1
22 R–Q2	P–B4

A mistake leading to defeat. After 22 ..., P–R4! and 23 ..., Kt–B4 Black would equalize the game without difficulty.

23 P×P	P×P
24 Q–R5	

Position after White's 24th move



24 ...	P–B5

Loses the exchange, but in any case Black was lost, as the pawn on B4 is indefensible. 24 ..., Kt–B3 would be followed by 25 Q–Kt5 ch, R–Kt2; 26 Kt×P, winning the pawn; 24 ..., Q–K1 by 25 B×P! (25 Kt×P, R×Kt), R×B; 26 Q–Kt4 ch and wins.

25 Kt–B5	R×Kt
26 B×R	Kt–B3
27 Q–R6	K–R1

If 27 ..., Kt(B3)×P; 28 R×Kt, R×B (28 ..., Kt×R; B–K6 ch); 29 R×QP, and Black loses.

28 R×P!	P×R

If 28 ..., Q×R; 29 Q×R ch, Kt–Kt1; 30 Q–B7, Kt–B3; and 31 R–Q1.

29 P–Q6	Q–Q1
30 P×Kt	Q×R
31 Q×R ch	Kt–Kt1
32 P–B8(Q)	Resigns

TOURNAMENT OF SIX, LENINGRAD

July

No. 3. *French Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*V. Ragozin* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K3
2 P–Q4	P–Q4
3 QKt–B3	B–Kt5
4 P–K5	P–KB3

As is well known, here 4 ..., P–QB4! is stronger, and gives Black an almost equal game. But in those days this was not yet known, and chess players were influenced by the Lasker–Maroczy game (New York, 1924) in which, after 4 ..., P–QB4 White obtained the better game.

5 Kt–B3	P–QB4
6 P–QR3	B–R4

6 ..., P×QP; 7 P×B, P×Kt is no better because of V. Rauzer's move 8 B–Q3, with White having an excellent game. But now, since the Reshevsky–Botvinnik game (Moscow, 1946), White plays Kt–KB3 and Black P–B3, which is undoubtedly in White's favour.

7 P–QKt4	P×KtP
8 Kt–QKt5	Kt–QB3
9 RP×P	

At once clears up the position. 9 ..., B×P ch is followed by 10 P–B3, B–K2; 11 B–R3, with Black in a difficult position. So Ragozin preferred to withdraw his Bishop.

9 ...	B–B2
10 P–B3	KKt–K2

10 ..., P×P is bad because of 11 Kt×P, Kt–B3 (..., B×Kt; 12 P×B, Kt×P; 13 B–B4); 12 B–KB4!; 10 ..., P–B4 is no better; 11 B–R3! with the threat of 12 Kt–Q6 ch.

11 P×P	P×P
12 B–Q3	O–O
13 O–O	B–Q2

Not 13 ..., P–K4; 14 Kt×B, Q×Kt; 15 P–Kt5!, P–K5 (15 ..., Kt–Q1; 16 P×P, P×P; 17 P–Kt6! etc.); 16 P×Kt, P×P; 17 B–B2, P×Kt; 18 Q×P, to White's obvious advantage. Now Black stubbornly attempts to advance the KP, but this only hastens his defeat. 13 ..., B–Kt1 was worth considering.

14 B–R6	R–B2
15 Q–Q2	P–K4
16 P×P	

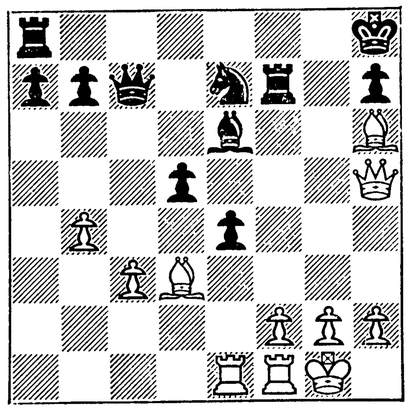
Another possibility is 16 Kt×B, Q×Kt; 17 P×P, Kt×P; 18 Kt–Q4. But White chooses the sharper continuation, leading more quickly to the win.

16 ...	Kt×P
17 Kt×Kt	P×Kt
18 Kt×B	Q×Kt
19 Q–Kt5 ch	K–R1
20 Q–R5!	B–K3

It may seem that Black, threatening 21 ..., Kt–B4 and 21 ..., P–K5, has achieved a good position.

21 QR–K1	P–K5

Position after Black's 21st move



Forced, for 21 ..., Kt–B4 is no good: 22 B–B4! Black has realized one of his threats, but after

22 P–QB4!

White's superiority is obvious. Black's centre is crumbling, and White's Bishop begins to operate with great force along the open black diagonals.

There was a lesser evil for Black in 22 ..., P×B; 23 R×B; but even so he could not save the game.

22 ...	R–B4
23 Q–K2	Q–K4

Not 23 ..., P×B; 24 Q–Kt2 ch.

24 B–B1!

The most decisive. However, 24 P×P was adequate; 24 ... R–R4; 25 P–Kt3! (25 B–B4, Q×B; 26 Q×R, B–Kt5; 27 Q–R4, Kt–Kt3), R×B; 26 P×B, etc.

But now 24 ..., R–R4 would be followed by 25 B–Kt2, P–Q5; 26 B×QP!, Q×B; 27 Q×R, Q×B; 28 Q–K5 ch.

24 ...	Q–Q3

Desperation!

25 P×P	P×B
26 B–Kt2 ch	K–Kt1
27 Q–Kt4 ch	Kt–Kt3
28 R×B	Q×QP
29 R×Kt ch	

The simplest way of winning.

29 ...	P×R
30 Q×P ch	K–B1
31 Q–Kt7 ch	K–K1
32 R–K1 ch	K–Q1
33 Q–K7 ch	K–QB1
34 R–B1 ch	Resigns

U.S.S.R. CHAMPIONSHIP

October

No. 4. *Dutch Defence*

I. Rabinovich (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–K3
2 P–QB4	P–KB4
3 P–KKt3	Kt–KB3
4 B–Kt2	B–K2
5 Kt–QB3	O–O
6 Kt–KB3	P–Q4
7 O–O	P–B3

The result is the variation known as the "stonewall," in which Black has a difficult game, but White also has difficulty in exploiting his spatial advantage.

Perhaps Black's task is more complicated if White develops his KKt to R3.

8 Q–B2	Q–K1
9 B–B4	

Not till ten years after this game did V. Chekhover find an apparently better plan for White. In the Chekhover–Riumin game (Young Masters' tournament, 1936), White played 9 B–Kt5!, Q–R4; 10 B×Kt, B×B; 11 P×P, KP×P; 12 P–K3. By exchanging at B6 White averted any attempt on Black's part to attack on the K side, and prepared his own Q side pawn advance.

9 ...	Q–R4
10 QR–Q1	QKt–Q2
11 P–Kt3	

Black could not advantageously capture the BP because of Kt–Q2. Now White decides to defend this pawn in order to free his Knight, but later he suffers for this weakening of QB3.

11 ...	Kt–K5
12 Kt–K5!	

This move was not playable before, because of Kt×Kt followed by Kt–Kt5. Now White makes a double threat: 13 Kt(B3)×Kt followed by P–B3, and 13 P–B3 followed

by 14 P–K4, in both cases with considerable advantage.

Black could win a pawn with the continuation: 12 ..., Kt×Kt(B3); 13 Q×Kt, Kt×Kt; 14 B×Kt, Q×KP; but after 15 B–B3, B–Kt5; 16 Q×B, Q×B; 17 Q–Q6, White has the advantage.

12 ... Kt–Kt4

Probably 12 ..., B–B3 is better, but in compensation for his restricted position Black wants to keep the two Bishops or force a weakening of White's K side. However, now White could reply simply with 13 P–B3, and after 13 ..., Kt–R6 ch could continue 14 B×Kt, Q×B; 15 P–K4 with an excellent game.

13 P–KR4 Kt–K5
14 B–KB3

Irresolute. With 14 Kt(B3)×Kt, BP×Kt; 15 P–B3 White would get a better game, as the sacrifice of the exchange 15 ..., R×B; 16 P×R gave Black no prospects.

14 ... Q–K1
15 Kt(K)×Kt B×Kt
16 K–Kt2 B–Kt5!
17 B×Kt

A serious error. Of course he should have played 17 Kt–Kt1 with the possibility of defence.

17 ... BP×B
18 R–KR1 Q–R4
19 P–B3 Q–Kt3

An error. The correct move is 19 ..., P–K4!; 20 QP×P, Q–Kt3, with the same position as in the game. But now White could hinder the development of Black's attack.

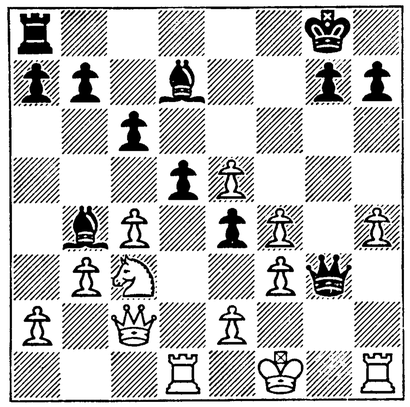
20 K–B1 P–K4!

Winning the pawn after 20 ..., KP×P; 21 Q×Q, P×Q; 22 R–B1 would hardly lead to Black's advantage.

At this point with 21 P–R5 White could save himself from the worst fate, though after 21 ..., Q–B4; 22 QP×P, KP×P; 23 Q×Q, B×Q; 24 R–B1, P–Q5; 25 Kt–Q1, B–K5; Black should have won the endgame. But White chooses a continuation which enables Black to end the game with a dash.

21 QP×P R×B!
22 P×R Q–Kt6!!

Position after Black's 22nd move



23 Kt×KP

There is no better move, as Black is threatening not only 23 ..., B–QB4, but also 23 ..., P–K6. 23 P×QP is followed by ..., B–QB4; 24 Kt×KP, B–R6 ch; and 25 ..., Q–Kt8, mate.

23 ... P×Kt

This is more exact than 23 ..., B–R6 ch as then White could still resist. Now 24 Q×P is not possible because of 24 ..., B–QB4; 25 P–K3, B–B4!

24 R×B B–B4

It was still possible for Black to lose: 24 ..., P–K6; 25 R×P ch!!

25 P–K3 Q×P ch
26 Q–B2 Q×R ch
27 K–K2 Q–R6
28 P–B5 Q–Kt5 ch
29 K–Q2 R–KB1

30 P–K6 Q×BP

But not 30 ..., R×BP; 31 R–Q8 ch, B–B1; 32 Q×R!. The rest goes without saying.

31 Q×Q R×Q
32 R×QKtP R–B7 ch
33 K–K1 R–B3
34 P–Kt4 B×KP
35 K–K2 B–Kt8
36 P–K7 K–B2
37 P–K8(Q) ch K×Q
38 R×KtP R–Kt3
39 R–KRP B–Q5
40 P–B5 R–Kt7 ch
41 K–B1 R–B7 ch
42 K–K1 P–K6
Resigns

No. 5. *Slav Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*V. Nenarokov* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–QB3
3 Kt–QB3	P–Q4
4 P–K3	P–KKt3

K. Schlechter's Variation of the Slav Defence. It gives Black a restricted but stable game.

5 Kt–B3 B–Kt2
6 Q–Kt3

6 B–Q3 is more usual, and is probably stronger.

6 ... O–O
7 B–Q2 P–K3
8 B–Q3 QKt–Q2
9 O–O Kt–Kt3
10 Kt–K5

Bad. Black's Knight manœuvre QKt–Q2–Kt3 recommended by E. Grünfeld, is dubious. So far no completely reliable defence for Black (in place of the Grünfeld manœuvre) has been found, though some Soviet masters have obtained a satisfactory game by playing 7 ..., P–QKt3 or 9 ..., P–QKt3.

In place of the correct continuation 10 KR–Q1 followed by P–K4 White plays for complications, which should have resulted in Black's favour.

10 ... KKt–Q2
11 P–B4 Kt×Kt
12 BP×Kt P×P
13 B×BP P–QB4!

Better, of course, than 13 ..., B×P; 14 P×B, Q×B; 15 R–B3! (but not 15 Kt–K4, because of 15 ..., Q–R4). Now Black forcedly loses the exchange for two pawns, but has two Bishops and good winning chances.

14 Kt–K4 P×P
15 B–Kt4 B×P

He could not save the exchange, as 15 ..., R–K1 is met by 16 Kt–Q6.

16 B×R Q×B
17 P×P B×P ch
18 K–R1 Q–R3

Destroys the fruits of all the preceding play. The correct move is 18 ..., B–Q2! after which White could at best count on no more than a draw. But now the back rank is undefended, and White launches a direct attack on the King.

19 QR–Q1 B–K4
20 R–Q8 ch K–Kt2
21 P–Kt3

But not P–KR3; 21 ..., Q–R5.

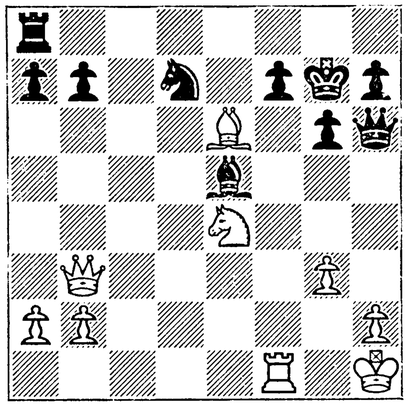
21 ... B–Q2!

The best chance. White threatened 22 Q–Kt4 with mating attack. But now, if 22 R×R, 22 ..., B–B3! and wins easily. However, a little surprise follows for Black.

22 R×B! Kt×R

23 B×P! P×B

Position after White's 23rd move



Forced, for if 23 ..., Kt–B3, then simply 24 Kt×Kt, B×Kt; 25 Q×P, R–KB1; 26 Q×RP, and White has an extra pawn. With the text move Black condemns himself to a difficult defence, which none the less leads to salvation.

24 Q×P K–R1
25 Q×Kt R–KB1
26 R×R ch Q×R
27 K–Kt2 Q–QKt1
28 Kt–Kt5 B–Kt2
29 Kt–K6

There was nothing in 29 Kt–B7 ch, K–Kt1; 30 Q–K6, Q–B1!

29 ... B–B3

Not, of course, 29 ..., B×P. 30 Kt–Q8, P–KR4; 31 Kt–B7 ch, K–Kt2 (31 ..., K–Kt1; 32 Kt–Kt5, B–Kt2; 33 Q–B7 ch, K–R1; 34 Q×P, etc.); 32 Kt–K5 ch! and White has a decisive advantage.

30 P–Kt3 Q–Kt1
31 P–KR4 P–Kt3

Now, if opportunity offers, Black threatens a very unpleasant check at QR1, and the Queen gets her freedom.

32 K–B2 P–KR3
33 Kt–B4

The last attempt.

33 ... Q–Kt2!
34 Q–K8 ch K–R2
35 Q–K4 B–K4!

The only, but quite adequate move. If 36 Kt×P, then B×P ch, and Black is saved.

36 Kt–Q3 B–Q3

Drawn.

No. 6. *French Defence*

A. Ilyin-Zhenevsky (White) — *M. Botvinnik* (Black)

1 P–K4 P–K3
2 Kt–QB3 P–Q4
3 P–KKt3

This system was suggested by Tartakower. In this game Black achieved at least equal play.

3 ... P×P
4 B–Kt2 B–Q2

Probably the best. 4 ..., P–KB4 is dangerous, as after 5 P–B3! at the cost of a pawn White holds the initiative for a long time.

White could play simply: 5 P–Q3, B–B3; 6 P×P, Q×Q ch; 7 Kt×Q with an equal game. 5 Kt×P at once is bad; 5 ..., B–B3 with the unpleasant threat of P–B4. The move chosen by White is not wholly good, as at R3 the Knight is out of play.

5 Kt–R3 B–B3
6 O–O Kt–Q2!

If 6 ..., Kt–B3; 7 Kt–Kt5, and the badly placed Knight comes into play.

7 Kt×P KKt–B3
8 P–Q3

Black was not afraid of 8 Kt×Kt ch and 9 B×B, as he considered that the doubled QB pawns were fully offset by White's weakness on the white squares on his K side and by the ineffective development of the Knight at R3. Later White took

this course, but derived no benefit from it.

8 ... B–K2
9 Kt–B4 O–O
10 B–Q2 P–K4

Black has completed development, and turns to the attack. As he would reply to 11 Kt–K2 with ..., Kt–Q4 and 12 ..., P–B4, White is forced into the following exchanges.

11 Kt×Kt ch Kt×Kt
12 B×B P×B
13 Kt–Kt2 Q–Q2
14 Kt–K3 Kt–Q4
15 Kt–B4 P–B3

Black plans QR–K1, B–Q3 and P–KB4. But he does not hurry with B–Q3, wishing to mask his scheme a little.

16 B–K3 QR–K1
17 P–QR3

Not, of course, 17 B×P; 17 ..., P–QB4.

17 ... P–QR3
18 K–Kt2!

Unable to prevent Black carrying out his plan, White sets up a strong defensive position, which proves to be anything but simple to break through.

18 ... B–Q3
19 P–KB3 P–KB4
20 B–Kt1 R–B3

But not R–K3, as the R at K1 is needed to defend the KP.

21 Q–K2

Q–Q2 was better; the Queen is badly placed on the K file.

21 ... P–KR4!
22 K–R1 P–R5
23 P×P!

The only move! It would be suicide to let Black take at Kt3, it would completely break up the King's position.

Now Black should have continued simply R–R3 and collected the RP. Instead he plays weakly, and his advantage begins to fade out.

23 ... Kt–B5
24 Q–Q2 R–R3
25 B–K3!

Exactly! Now White will succeed in exchanging off Black's excellent Knight and will have an opportunity to improve his position considerably.

25 ... R×P
26 B×Kt R×B
27 QR–K1 Q–B2
28 Q–Kt2 Q–R4
29 R–K3

Weak! The correct move is 29 Q–Kt3!; and if 29 ..., R–K3, then 30 Q×R, equalizing the game.

29 ... R–K3
30 R–KKt1 Q–R3
31 P–Kt4 R–R5
32 Q–K2

An irrecoverable mistake! 32 R–K2 was obligatory, to meet the threat R–Kt3.

Note that now Black cannot play 32 ..., P–K5. 33 Kt×B, P×BP; 34 R×R! and White wins.

32 ... Q–B5
33 Q–Kt2

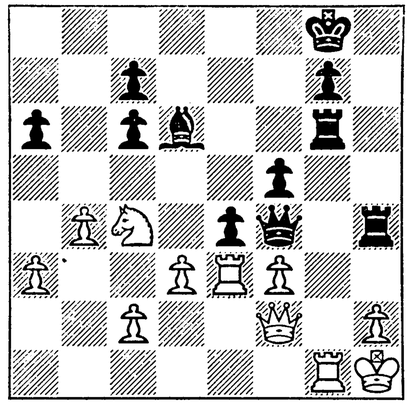
Now the White Queen is lost. But even with 33 R–Kt2 things are bad for him, as there follows 33 ..., R–R6 and then R(K3)–R3, with slow strangulation.

33 ... R–Kt3
34 Q–B2 P–K5!

The decisive move! Not so good is 34 ..., R×P ch at once; 35 Q×R, R–R3; 36 Q×R, Q×Q ch; 37 K–Kt2. White's next move is forced, as 35 R–K2 is followed by at least 35 ..., R×R and 36 ..., P×P. Defeat also follows 35 R×R, R×P ch; 36

K–Kt1, R×Q; 37 K×R, Q–R5 ch; and 38 . . ., B–B5.

Position after Black's 34th move



35 Kt×B	R×P ch
36 Q×R	R–R3
37 R–K2	Q×P ch

We still had a long time to play after this. I had the impression that in the text continuation the White King must remain on R1! Victory would have followed quickly after 37 . . ., R×Q ch; 38 R×R, Q×P ch; 39 R(R)–Kt2, P×Kt; 40 K–R2, Q–R4 ch; 41 K–Kt3, P–Kt4!

38 R(K2)–Kt2	R×Q ch
39 K×R	Q–R4 ch
40 K–Kt3	P×Kt

In the variation above indicated it would now be Black's move, not White's.

41 P×P	Q–Kt5 ch
42 K–B2	Q–B5 ch
43 K–K2	Q×P ch
44 K–Q2	Q–Q5 ch
45 K–K2	K–B2
46 R–Kt6!	

To prevent the Black Queen reaching her KR3, for then the win would be quite simple.

46 . . .	Q–B6!
47 K–Q1	P–Q4

Necessary! For instance, 47 . . ., P–B5 at once is bad; 48 R×P ch, Q×R; 49 R×Q ch, K×R; 50 P–B4!, K–B3; 51 P–R4, K–K3; 52 P–R5!, P–Q4 (52 . . ., K–Q2; 53 K–K2, P–Q4; 54 P×P, P×P; 55 K–B3, K–B3; 56 K×P, K–Kt4; 57 K–K5, K–B5; 58 P–Kt5!); 53 P–Kt5!, K–Q3 (53 . . ., K–Q2; 54 P×BP ch, K×P; 55 P×P ch, K×P; 56 K–K2); 54 P–B5 ch!, K–B2; 55 P–Kt6 ch, with a draw in every case.

48 R(6)–Kt3

After all White lets the Queen through to R3, but that does not alter the situation, as in any other case the advance of the KBP would decide.

48 . . .	Q–Q5 ch
49 K–K2	Q–K5 ch
50 K–Q2	Q–B5 ch
51 K–K2	Q–R3
52 R(1)–Kt2	P–Kt3!

White had set his last hope in 52 . . ., P–B5; followed by 53 R×P ch, and a draw. Now Black's passed pawns cannot be halted; after R×KKtP the King will be able to defend the BP.

53 P–R4	P–B5
54 R–QB3	P–Kt4
55 P–Kt5	Q–R4 ch
56 K–Q2	BP×P
57 P×P	P×P
58 R–B7 ch	K–B3
59 R–B6 ch	K–B4
60 R–B5	Q–B2
61 R×KtP	P–Kt5
62 P–B4	P–B6
63 R–KKt1	P–B7
64 R–KB1	P–Kt6
65 R×QP ch	K–Kt5
66 R–Q4 ch	

But supposing Black were to play hastily 66 . . ., K–B6; 67 R–B1, P–Kt7; 68 R–B3 and mate!

66 . . .	K–R6
Resigns	

NINETEEN TWENTY-NINE

ALL the winter of 1927/1928 I prepared for the competitive entrance examination for the Polytechnic Institute, and did not play chess at all, except for participating in the championship of the regional committee of the Metal-Workers' Trade Union. In August, 1928, I successfully passed the entrance examination and, rather belatedly, began my studies.

Naturally, now I had even less time for chess; but in January, 1929, I went to Moscow to take part in a team competition among the Higher Educational Institutions of Moscow, Leningrad, Kharkov, and Tashkent. I had no special success, and my game with Poliak (No. 7) will give some idea of my rather diffident play during this period.

The reader may be surprised to see that in the July I was called upon to fight for the chess honour of the little town of Krechevitsa (and not of Leningrad) against the Master, V. Sozin. This is explained by the circumstance that we students spent the summer there, and when the local chess-players had a match against those of Novgorod they naturally strengthened their team by drawing on the Polytechnic students. My game with Sozin was the only important game I played there.

In the September I was in Odessa, playing in the U.S.S.R. Sixth Championship. In my section of the quarter-finals I was first, but I was so exhausted (we had to play three games a day) that in the semi-finals I was not one of the victors—the first serious failure I had had to experience.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS' TEAM COMPETITION, MOSCOW

January

No. 7. *Queen's Gambit Declined*

A. Poliak (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–QB4	Kt–KB3
2 Kt–QB3	P–K3
3 P–Q4	P–Q4
4 B–Kt5	QKt–Q2
5 P–K3	P–QB3
6 P–QR3	

This move prevents the Cambridge Springs Defence. It was played by Capablanca in the fifth and by Alekhine in the 34th game of their match in 1927.

6 . . .	B–K2
7 Kt–B3	O–O
8 R–B1	

If at once B–Q3, there may follow 8 . . ., P×P; 9 B×P, P–Kt4; 10 B–Q3, P–QR3. After the text move Black has two possibilities: 8 . . ., P×P; and Kt–Q4 (Capablanca's usual system) and the less hackneyed 8 . . ., P–QKt3, as in this game.

8 . . .	P–QKt3
9 P×P	KP×P

Of course, 9 . . ., BP×P is worse; it would greatly weaken the Q side. In the position that has arisen it is inexpedient for White to follow Duras with 10 Q–R4, because of 10 . . ., B–Kt2, and now not 11 B–R6, . . ., because of P–Kt4. So White is forced to turn his attention to the K side.

10 B–Q3	B–Kt2
11 O–O	

A mistake, after which Black equalizes without difficulty. Correct is 11 Q–B2, preventing 11 ..., Kt–K5.

11 ... Kt–K5
12 B×Kt

In all other continuations Black would hold K5, with a good game.

12 ... B×B
13 Kt×B Q×Kt
14 B–Kt1 KR–K1
15 Q–Q3 Kt–B1
16 P–B4

A rather risky move.

Black should now have played 16 ..., Q–K2, with quite a good game. The Queen's retreat to B3 causes some complications.

16 ... Q–B3
17 P–K4! P×P
18 Kt×P Q–K2
19 R(QB)–K1!

There is nothing in 19 Kt–Kt5, P–R3! (but not 19 ..., Q–K6 ch; 20 Q×Q, R×Q; 21 B–R2!); 20 Kt–R7, Q–K6 ch.

19 ... P–QB4

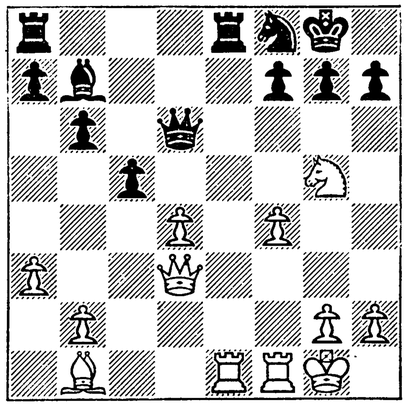
At first glance a move of doubtful value, but in reality the only acceptable one. 19 ..., QR–Q1; 20 Q–KKt3 is bad, with much unpleasantness for Black.

If now 20 Kt×P, then 20 ..., Q×R; 21 R×Q, R×R ch; 22 K–B2, R–K2 (or 22 ..., R×B), with at least a draw for Black. White could force a draw also with 20 P–Q5, P–B4; 21 P–Q6, P×Kt; 22 P×Q, P×Q; 23 P×Kt(Q) ch, which he should have done.

20 Kt–Kt5 Q–Q3

During play I overlooked that after 20 ..., Q×R; 21 R×Q, R×R ch; 22 K–B2, R–K2; 23 Kt×RP Black has a simple but convincing reply in 23 ..., B–K5! affording every chance of a win.

Position after Black's 20th move



How should White play now? It is not so simple to decide this question correctly. He loses after 21 P×P, Q×P ch; 22 K–R1, R×R; 23 R×R, Q–KB7. 21 Kt×BP, Q–Q4 is obviously bad. There remains the sole and strongest move, 21 R–K5! depriving Black of Q4, but it seems Black could have drawn in this case too, for instance: 21 R–K5!, Kt–Kt3!; 22 Kt×BP!, Q×P ch; 23 Q×Q, P×Q; 24 B–R2!, Kt×R; 25 P×Kt, B–R3!; 26 R–B2, P–KR3!; 27 Kt–Q6 ch, K–R2; 28 Kt×R, R×Kt; 29 P–K6, P–Q6.

21 Kt×RP Q–Q4!

Evidently White had not foreseen the Black Queen's interesting manœuvre. He was reckoning only on 21 ..., Q×P ch.

22 Q–R3 Q×QP ch
23 K–R1 Q–B7
24 R–B1

If 24 R–Q1; 24 ..., QR–Q1, still forcing the R's retreat to B1. Nor is 24 Kt×Kt, of use; 24 ..., R×R, and the Black King retreats from check to K2

24 ... B×P ch
25 Q×B Q×Q ch
26 K×Q Kt×Kt
27 B×Kt ch

Refusal to exchange the smaller

pieces would not bring any essential change.

27 ... K×B
28 K–B3 QR–Q1
29 QR–Q1 K–Kt3
30 KR–K1 K–B3
31 P–R3 KR×R
32 R×R(Q8) R–QB8
33 R–Q2 P–B5
34 R–Q6 ch

Desperation!

34 ... K–K2
35 R–Q2 P–B6
36 R–K2 ch K–Q3
37 K–B2 P×P
38 R×P R–B6
39 R–Q2 ch K–K3
40 R–K2 ch K–B3
Resigns

KRECHEVITSA–NOVGOROD MATCH

July

No. 8. *Queen's Gambit Declined*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*V. Sozin* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 P–QB4	P–QB3
3 Kt–KB3	Kt–B3
4 P–K3	P–K3
5 B–Q3	QKt–Q2
6 O–O	

At this time I was afraid of the Meran Variation, well known to Sozin, so I did not play 6 Kt–B3. Black should have followed 6 O–O simply with 6 ..., P×P; 7 B×P, B–Q3, then O–O and P–K4 with an equal game.

6 ... B–K2
7 Kt–B3 O–O
8 P–K4 P×KP
9 Kt×P P–QKt3

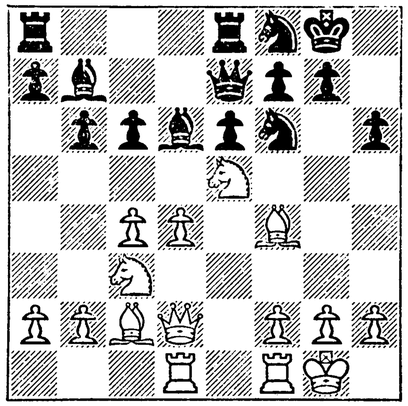
At that time this system was thought quite good for Black. In this game White finds an original plan.

10 B–B4 B–Kt2
11 Kt–B3!

After 11 ..., P–B4 White intended to continue 12 P–Q5, P×P; 13 P×P, Kt×P; 14 Kt×Kt, B×Kt; 15 B×P ch, K×B; 16 Q×B. Black should have chosen this variation, as later the reply P–Q5 makes P–QB4 unplayable.

11 ... P–KR3
12 B–B2 R–K1
13 Q–Q2 Kt–B1
14 QR–Q1 B–Q3
15 Kt–K5 Q–K2

Position after Black's 15th move



16 B×P!

A purely positional sacrifice. For his Bishop White gets two pawns. But the destruction of the Black K side and the ease with which White can transfer his major pieces to that side make it justifiable to assume that White's attack will be almost irresistible.

16 ... P×B
17 Q×P B×Kt

Black realizes that sooner or later the White Knight will have to be eliminated. He decides to do so now,

so as to have some counter-play, arising from 18 ..., Kt–Kt5.

18 P×B Kt–Kt5

18 ..., Kt(3)–R2 loses at once; 19 Kt–K4.

19 Q–B4 P–KB4
20 P×P e.p.

After 20 P–KR3, Kt–Kt3; 21 Q–Kt3, Kt×KP; 22 P–B4, Q–Kt2 equality of material would be restored, but I preferred to continue the attack.

20 ... Kt×P
21 R–Q3 P–K4
22 Q–R6 Kt(B3)–R2
23 R–Kt3 ch K–R1
24 Kt–K4 QR–Q1
25 Kt–Kt5

It seems 25 P–B4 gave grounds for a win. In face of the strong threat of P–KB5 Black has nothing better than 25 ..., P×P, but then 26 R×P, with the unanswerable threats of R(B)–Kt4 or Kt–B6. Choosing 25 Kt–Kt5, I overlooked Black's 30th move.

25 ... R–Q2
26 Kt×Kt Kt×Kt
27 B×Kt Q×B
28 Q–B6 ch R–Kt2
29 R–Q1 B–B1
30 P–KR4 R(K)–Kt1

The strongest! Black threatens 31 ..., Q–B4, seizing the initiative. So the text continuation is the only one for White.

31 Q×KP Q–B4

31 ..., Q×RP was no use; 32 R–Q4, Q–R3 (32 ..., Q–K2; 33 Q×Q loses a piece); 33 R–Q6! But now the position is approximately equal, though Black must fight for a draw because of the three White linked passed pawns.

32 Q×Q B×Q
33 R×R R×R
34 P–B3! B–K3
35 P–QKt3 K–Kt1
36 R–Q6 B–Q2
37 P–KKt4 K–B1
38 K–B2 K–K2
39 R–Q2 P–R4

White should have played 39 R–Q3 or R–Q1. Here Black might have forced a draw with 39 ..., B×P; 40 P×B, R×P, as the KRP cannot be defended.

40 K–Kt3 B–K1
41 K–B4 R–B2 ch
42 K–Kt3 K–B3
43 R–K2 R–K2

After exchanging Rooks Black is lost. He should have played: 43 ..., B–Q2; though even so the three passed pawns are very dangerous.

44 R×R K×R
45 P–R5 K–B3
46 K–B4 P–Kt4

Foreseeing the danger, Black tries to exchange pawns.

47 P×P P×P
48 P–Kt5 ch K–Kt2

There is no salvation for Black in 48 ..., K–K3; 49 K–Kt4, B–Q2; 50 P–B4, K–Q4 dis. ch; 51 K–R4, K–K5; 52 P–R6!, B–B4; 53 K–R5.

49 P–R6 ch K–Kt3
50 K–K5 B–B2
51 P–B4 B–Kt1
52 K–Q6 P–R5
53 P×P P×P
54 P–R3

Black has secured the Q side, but the *denouement* must come on the K side.

54 ... B–R2
55 K–K7

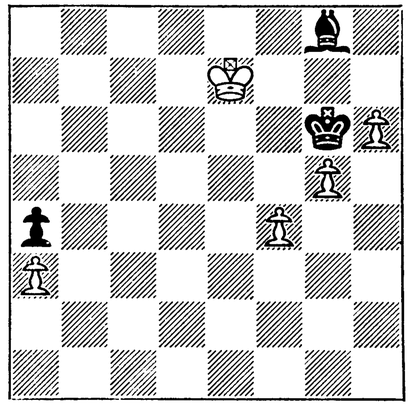
After 55 K–K6!, B–Kt1 ch; 56 K–K7, B–R2; 57 K–B8 the win is simple.

55 ... B–Kt1
56 K–Q6

White tries to restore the position, but now Black is on guard.

56 ... K–B4
57 K–K7 K–Kt3

Position after Black's 57th move



A position that deserves a note. Obviously, if it is Black's move he loses. So White must win a tempo. He can do this by 58 K–Q7!, K–B4 (58 ..., B–R2; 59 K–K6, or if 58 ..., K–B2; 59 P–B5, B–R2; 60 P–Kt6 ch, B×P; 61 P×B ch, K×P, Black lacks one tempo for a draw); 59 K–K8!, K–Kt3; 60 K–K7! and wins. Instead, White provokes Black to transfer his Bishop to the diagonal R2–Kt8, hoping for an even easier win; but it transpires that the resulting position is inadequate.

58 K–K8 B–K3
59 K–B8 B–B4
60 K–K7 B–B7
61 K–Q6 B–Q6
62 K–K6 B–B5 ch
63 K–K7

Only now did White see that 63 K–K5, B–Q6; 64 P–B5 ch, B×P; 65 P–R7, K×P; 66 K×B leads to a draw, as the BK will succeed in getting to R1. So after a few more moves the opponents agreed to a draw.

A game interesting in all its stages.

U.S.S.R. CHAMPIONSHIP

Semi-Finals

Odessa, September

No. 9. *Queen's Indian Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*B. Silich* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–QKt3
3 Kt–QB3	B–Kt2
4 Q–B2	

This well-known variation is of little benefit to Black, as it is difficult for him to prevent P–K4. Best of all here is probably 4 ..., P–Q4 to sharpen the struggle. In Black's text continuation White gets a very strong centre.

4 ... P–K3
5 P–K4 B–Kt5
6 B–Q3 B×Kt ch

This exchange, doubling the White pawns, is necessary, as after 7 Kt–K2 White could recapture the Bishop with Knight.

7 P×B P–Q3
8 Kt–K2 P–B4

To block the doubled BPs.

9 O–O Kt–B3
10 P–B4 Q–K2

Both sides' plans are now defined. White intends to attack in the centre, Black intends to Castle on the Q side, an idea approximately that of Capablanca's game in an analogous position against Kmoch a little earlier (Budapest, 1928).

11 P–Q5 Kt–QR4!

The White pawn on B4 is weak. 12 P–K5, Kt–Q2; 13 QP×P, BP×P; 14 B×P, O–O–O is clearly to Black's advantage. So White regroups forces

to attack in the centre and simultaneously to defend B4.

12 Kt–Kt3 O–O–O
13 Q–K2

14 P–K5 now constitutes a serious threat, so Black attempts a counter-attack.

13 ... P–R4
14 P–K5 Kt–K1

If 14 ..., Kt–Q2; 15 Kt–K4, QP×P; 16 BP×P, Kt×P; 17 B–Kt5, P–B3; 18 Kt×KBP!

15 KP×P Kt×QP

After 15 ..., Q×P; 16 P–B5, P×QP; 17 B–B4, Q–QB3; 18 BP×P, Q×QP; 19 QR–Q1 White has a strong attack.

16 P–B5 P–K4

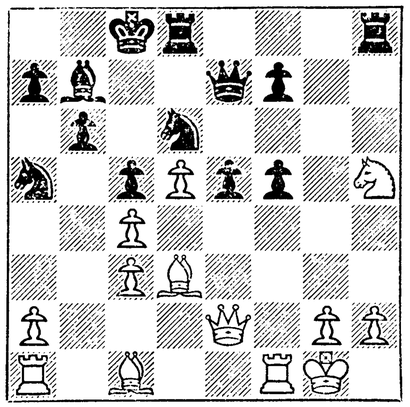
Of course, the only chance. Black intends after P–R5 and P–B3 to keep the centre closed, and exploit good prospects on the wings.

17 P–B6! P×P
18 Kt×P P–B4

At first sight a brilliant move, which would seem to defeat White's plan, as after 19 B×P ch, K–Kt1! Black's game is the better.

Yet he should have played 18 ..., P–K5; 19 Kt×P, Q–K4; 20 P–KR3, Q×BP; 21 Kt×P, Kt×Kt; 22 B×Kt, Kt×P; 23 B–Kt5, though in this case also White's game is to be preferred.

Position after Black's 18th move



19 Kt–Kt7

Apparently Black overlooked this manœuvre.

19 ... P–K5
20 Kt×P Kt×Kt
21 R×Kt Q–Q3

After 21 ..., Q–R5 follows 22 B–B4, P×B; 23 Q–K5, and mate next move.

22 Q×P

Now the counter-attack is repulsed, and Black must lose.

22 ... Q×P ch
23 K–B2 R(Q)–K1
24 Q–B4 Q–R5 ch
25 Q×Q R×Q
26 B–B4! R–B1
27 B–Q6 R–Kt1
28 R×P K–Q1
29 R–K1 Resigns

NINETEEN THIRTY

THE lesson I had received in Odessa was not wasted. Study at the Institute continued to take up much of my time, but when I again sat down at a chess board in the winter of 1930 I had never before, perhaps, felt such determination to win.

In the Tournament of Leningrad Masters I frequently got into a difficult situation (see Games 10 and 11) but almost always I found a way to create complications. In the end I won first place; this was my first success among masters.

The three games (13, 14, 15) against the Master I. Kann, were all played in Leningrad–Moscow matches. It must be remarked that after Kann had won a game against me in the Sixth U.S.S.R. Championship (Odessa, 1929) and had occupied third place, there were many who considered that "a check had been found" for Botvinnik too. This opinion was confirmed when Kann beat me again, winning the second game in the Leningrad–Moscow match of May, 1930. But in the autumn all that was silenced; in the next match played between the teams of the two capitals Kann lost both his games against me.

1930 marked a turning-point: I learned the art of winning regularly against masters.

LENINGRAD MASTERS' TOURNAMENT

March

No. 10. *Two Knights' Defence*

V. Ragozin (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K4
2 Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3 B–B4	Kt–B3
4 P–Q4	P×P
5 O–O	Kt×P
6 R–K1	P–Q4
7 Kt–B3	

This move was introduced into tournament practice by Canal. Recently several good continuations have been found against it. But Black prefers to transpose the game back to the variation following 7 B×P.

7 ... P×B
8 R×Kt ch B–K2
9 Kt×P P–B4
10 R–B4 O–O
11 Kt×Kt Q×Q ch
12 Kt×Q P×Kt
13 R×QBP B–Q3
14 B–K3

The beginning of all White's later difficulties. True, also bad were 14 R×P, B–Kt2; and 14 B–B4, B–R3; 15 B×B, KR–K1! winning the exchange, but after the simple continuation 14 Kt–B3 and preparing B–B4 White would appear to have equalized the game.

14 ... P–B5
15 B–Q4 R–B4

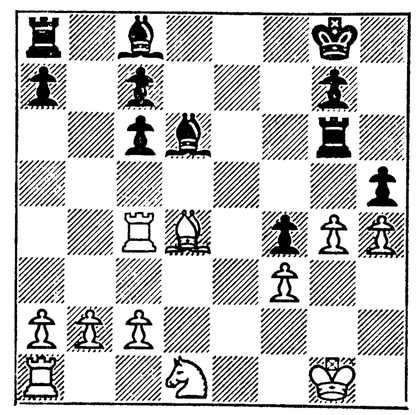
With the strong threat 16 ..., P–B4. As before, it is unprofitable for White to take the BP.

16 P–KKt4

This aggressive sally weakens the K side. However, the other continuation, 16 P–KB3, P–B4; 17 B–B2, is also favourable to Black, after 17 ..., B–K3.

16 ... R–KKt4
17 P–KB3 P–KR4!
18 P–KR4 R–Kt3

Position after Black's 18th move



Black lets slip a good winning chance. 18 ..., R–Q4!; 19 Kt–B3, B–R3!; 20 R×P (or 20 R–R4, R×B; 21 R×R, B–B4; 22 R–Q1, R–Q1, and wins), R×B; 21 R×B(R3), B–B4! (but not 21 ...,

P×P; 22 Kt–Kt5, R–Q7; 23 Kt×B, P×Kt; 24 R–K1!, P×P; 25 R–K7, which leads to a draw); 22 K–B1, P×P; 23 P×P, P–B6; 24 R–KKt6, R–K1, etc. After Black's text move White can equalize the game again.

19 P–Kt5 P–R4

Necessary. At R2 the pawn was weak.

20 Kt–B2 R–K3
21 Kt–K4 B–R3
22 R–B3

This sacrifice of the exchange was quite sound and should have led to a draw. White would have lost after 22 Kt×B, because of 22 ..., R×Kt, winning a piece; or after 22 R×P, B–Kt2; 23 Kt–B5 (23 R–B4, B×Kt; 24 P×B, R×P), B×R; 24 Kt×R, R–K1; 25 Kt×KtP, R–K7 with the stronger attack. But now, owing to the closed nature of the position, the game acquires a drawn character.

22 ... B–Kt5
23 R–Kt3 B–B5
24 P–B3 B×R
25 RP×B B–B1
26 P–Kt4 P–R5
27 K–B1 KR–K1
28 K–K2 P–B4
29 P×P KR–Kt1
30 R–R2 R–Kt6

The King should have been brought up.

31 Kt–Q2 R–Kt4

After this White even has winning chances, as he captures the RP.

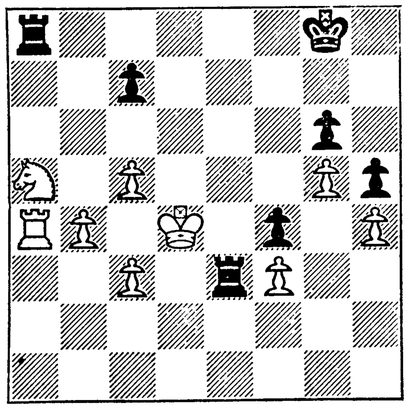
32 P–Kt4! P–Kt3

To exchange Bishops at any rate.

33 K–Q3 B–Kt2
34 Kt–Kt3! R(Kt)–Kt1
35 Kt–R5 B×B
36 K×B R–K1
37 R×P R–K6

At this, for Black, critical stage the game was adjourned. True, he gets the passed pawn, but even so the threatened advance of the White QKtP is even more dangerous.

Position after Black's 37th move



38 P–Kt5 R×KBP
39 P–Kt6 P×P
40 P×P R–Q1 ch

The only possible! It is easy to see that after 40 ..., R–K6; 41 P–Kt7, R–Q1 ch; 42 K–B5, P–B6; 43 Kt–B4! White wins.

41 K–B4

Not 41 K–K5, R×P; 42 K×P, R–B4!; 43 P–Kt7, R–Kt4.

41 ... R–K6
42 Kt–B6

Unusually attractive, but dangerous. White could force a draw by playing 42 R–R2!, R–B1 ch; 43 K–Kt4, R–K3; 44 K–Kt5 (not 44 P–Kt7, R–Kt3 ch), R–K4 ch; 45 K–Kt4 (45 K–R6, R–R1 ch), R–K3, and both sides must repeat moves.

42 ... R–K5 ch
43 Kt–Q4

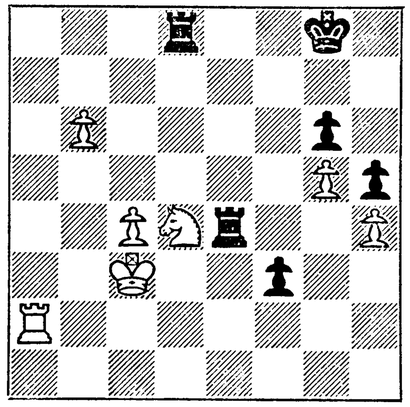
Not, of course, 43 K–Kt3, R×R; 44 K×R, P–B6, and the pawn is queened.

43 ... P–B6
44 R–R2 R–B1 ch
45 K–Kt4!

Again forced! The King has five ways of retreat, but only one sound way. The following continuations would have been fatal to White. (1) 45 K–Q3 (or 45 K–Kt3), R–K2; and 46 ..., R–Kt2, winning the pawn. (2) 45 K–Q5, R–K2; 46 Kt×P, R–Q2 ch!; 47 K–K6, R–Kt2. (3) 45 K–Kt5, R–K4 ch; 46 K–Kt4, R–Kt1, and Black wins.

45 ... R–K8
46 P–B4 R–K5
47 K–B3 R–K6 ch
48 K–Kt4 R–K5
49 K–B3 R–Q1

Position after Black's 49th move



The only practical possibility of continuing the attempt to win; but, as N. Grigoriev pointed out, after 50 Kt–Kt3, R–K7; 51 R–R1, P–B7; 52 R–KB1, R–KB1!; 53 P–Kt7, R–Kt1; 54 Kt–R5 White draws. White's following text mistake leads immediately to *denouement*.

50 Kt–B6 R–K6 ch

The only way. The White King is forced to occupy a disadvantageous position (on the file of his advanced pawn).

51 K–Kt4 R–K7
52 R–R1 P–B7
53 Kt×R

Desperation! But 53 R–KB1, R–KB1; 54 P–Kt7, R–Kt7 ch; and 55 ..., R×P is also hopeless for White.

53 ... R–K8
54 R–R8

Or 54 P–Kt7, R×R.

54 ... P–B8(Q)
55 Kt–B6 dis. ch

After 55 Kt–K8 dis. ch, K–B2!; 56 R–B8 ch, K×Kt; 57 R×Q, R×R Black has an easy win.

55 ... K–Kt2
56 R–R7 ch K–B1
57 P–Kt7 R–Kt8 ch
58 K–B5 Q–B4 ch
59 K–Q6 R–Q8 ch
60 K–B7 Q–Q2 ch
61 K–Kt6 R–Kt8 ch
62 K–B5 R×P
63 R–R8 ch K–Kt2
Resigns

Despite mistakes on both sides, this was an interesting game, especially in its closing stage.

On the adjournment at move 37 I analysed the position very thoroughly right down to move 48. 49 ..., R–Q1! was found at the board, not at home. None the less I was very proud of this analysis, as hitherto I had been very weak in this branch.

No. 11. *Four Knights' Game*

J. Rochlin (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K4
2 Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3 Kt–B3	B–Kt5
4 B–Kt5	Kt–B3
5 P–Q3	

The usual move is 5 O–O, and then 6 P–Q3. True, Black does not now obtain the decisive advantage which White gets in the analogous variation 5 O–O, P–Q3; 6 Kt–Q5!, but in any case one can reckon Black's opening difficulties as eliminated.

5 ... Kt–Q5

6 B–R4 P–QKt4
7 B–Kt3 P–Q4

Seemingly the most energetic. 7 ..., P–Q3 might be followed by 8 P–R3! and White has nothing to fear. But now there is the threat of 8 ..., B–Kt5, also 8 ..., Kt×Kt ch; 9 Q×Kt, P–Q5. So White's reply is admittedly the best.

8 Kt×KP Kt×B

The first mistake. Correct is 8 ..., Q–K2!; 9 P–B4 (9 B–KB4, Kt×B; 10 BP×Kt, P–Q5; 11 P–QR3, B–Q3; 12 Kt–B6, Q–Q2), O–O; and White has a very difficult game.

9 BP×Kt P–Q5

An obvious blunder! With 9 ..., P×P Black would get at least an equal game. After the text move he loses a pawn.

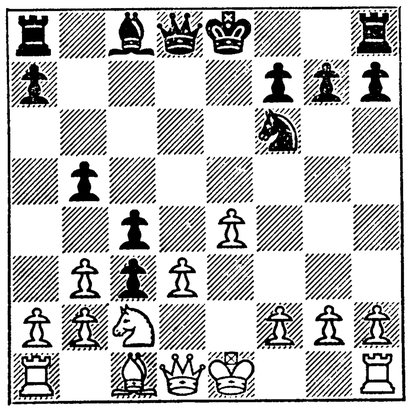
10 Kt–B6 P×Kt
11 Kt×B

Not, of course, 11 Kt×Q, P–B7 ch, and Black wins the exchange. I chose this continuation because I counted on winning a piece with 11 ..., Q–Q5; 12 Kt–B2, P×P! etc., and only afterward noticed that 11 ..., Q–Q5 is followed by 12 P×P, Q×P ch; 13 B–Q2, and the Knight is protected! Black's following attempt to break through the White centre is a still better possibility.

11 ... P–B4!
12 Kt–B2 P–B5

A very interesting position. White gains no advantage with 13 QP×P, Q×Q ch; 14 K×Q, Kt×P; 15 R–K1, B–Kt2; 16 P–B3, O–O–O ch; nor with 13 P–K5, P×QP!; 14 P×Kt, P–Q7 ch; 15 B×P, P×B ch; 16 Q×P, Q×P; and the doubled extra pawn is of no essential importance. The continuation White chose seems the most natural.

Position after Black's 12th move



13 P(Kt3)×P KtP×P
14 P–K5! Kt–Kt5

Now not 14 ..., P×P; 15 P×Kt, P–Q7 ch; 16 B×P, P×B ch; 17 Q×P, Q×P; and White has an extra pawn.

15 P–Q4 P×P
16 B×P Q–R4 ch
17 Q–Q2!

Thoroughly sound! In returning the pawn White gets a very favourable endgame. Retiring the King 17 K–B1, R–QKt1; 18 B–R3, B–B4 would lead to a complicated and uncertain game.

17 ... Q×Q ch
18 K×Q Kt×BP
19 KR–KB1 Kt–K5 ch
20 K–K3 B–Kt2
21 R–B4

A stereotyped move, after which the advantage passes to Black. More logical is 21 QR–Kt1! exploiting the undefended Black Bishop. E.g. 21 QR–Kt1, P–QR4 (preventing the unpleasant Kt–Kt4); 22 B–R3, B–Q4; 23 R–Kt5, B–B3; 24 R–Kt6, B–Q4; 25 R–B4, with a difficult game for Black.

21 ... P–B6

Black seizes control of QKt8 and KB8. To cap it all, the Rook at B4 is in danger.

22 B–R3 Kt–Q7
23 B–B5

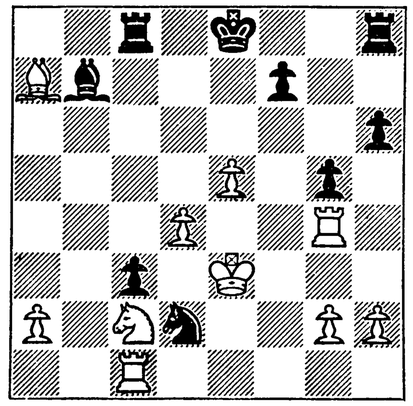
White underestimates the seriousness of the Rook's position. The best was 23 P–R4, Kt–B5 ch; 24 K–Q3, R–B1; 25 B–B5, Kt×P ch; 26 K×P.

23 ... P–Kt4
24 R–Kt4

The only retreat! 24 R–B5 loses (B–K5), and after 24 R–B2 or R–B6, Kt–K5 and then 25 ..., Kt×B.

24 ... P–KR3
25 R–QB1 R–QB1
26 B×P

Position after White's 26th move



A losing move, as Black can bring the stranded King's Rook into play. More chances in 26 P–KR4, P–KR4 (but not 26 ..., Kt–B5 ch; 27 K–B2!, Kt×P; 28 R–K1); 27 R×P, Kt–K5; 28 R–B5, Kt×B; 29 P×Kt, R×P; 30 K–Q4, R–B2. White must have now been counting only on 26 ..., R–R1; 27 B–B5 with a probable draw, but things went a little differently.

26 ... P–B4!
27 P×P e.p. K–B2

The whole point! Now White will not have the blocking move B–K7, and the King's Rook comes into play with decisive effect.

28 B–B5 K×P
29 Kt–Kt4 KR–K1 ch
30 K–Q3 Kt–K5

Winning the exchange at least.

31 R–B1 ch K–Kt3

There is no defence to 32 ..., P–R4, while 32 P–KR4 is met by 32 K–R4.

32 R×Kt B×R ch
33 K×P B×P
34 R–B2 B–R6

34 ..., B–K5 at once is simpler.

35 Kt–Q3 B–B4
36 Kt–Kt4 B–K5
37 K–Q2 P–R4
38 P–QR3 P–R5
39 Kt–R2 P–Kt5
40 Kt–B3 B–B6
41 B–Q6 R(B)–Q1
42 B–B5 P–R6
43 Kt–Kt5 B–Kt7
Resigns

No. 12. *Nimzo-Indian Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*S. Gotthilf* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4 Q–Kt3	P–B4
5 P×P	Kt–R3

Until this game I had always regarded 5 ..., Kt–QR3 as weak. I had formed this opinion as the result of the fourth game in the first match between Alekhine and Bogoljubov, in which to 6 P–QR3 Alekhine continued 6 ..., B×Kt ch and got a bad game.

6 P–QR3 B×BP
7 Kt–B3 O–O

When analysing this game I came to the conclusion that after 7 ..., P–QKt3 White has no advantage at all, and in the same year, playing

Black, I adopted this system against I. Kann (see Game No. 15).

8 B–Kt5 B–K2

The only way to relieve the pin at KB3; in addition the Bishop vacates B4 for the Knight.

9 P–K4 P–Q3

Defence against the threat P–K5. Perhaps here too 9 ..., P–QKt3 would be better. In that case the Queen's Bishop develops at once along the diagonal QR1–KR8 and, as compared with the text continuation, Black saves a tempo. If after 9 ..., P–QKt3; 10 P–K5, then 10 ..., Kt–K1.

10 B–K2 B–Q2
11 O–O

Not, of course, 11 Q×P, Kt–B4; 12 Q–Kt4, P–QR4.

11 ... B–B3
12 Q–B2 P–KR3
13 B–B4 Kt–B4
14 P–K5

The only move, consolidating White's advantage. After 14 Kt–Q2, P–Q4!; 15 P–K5, KKt–K5 Black has a fair game. But now White obtains a pawn majority on the Q side (three pawns against two).

14 ... KKt–K5

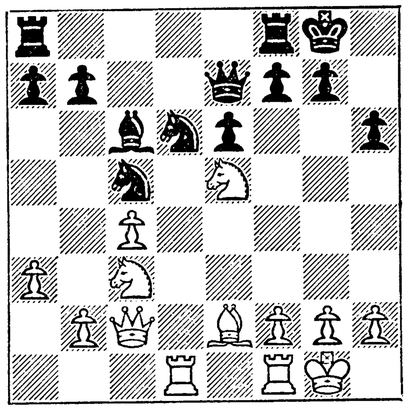
The best continuation, as by exchanging Bishops Black makes defence easier. 14 ..., P×P, Kt×P would be bad. Now it seems that Black has a perfectly satisfactory position, as in the struggle for K5 he has even emerged victor; however, the ensuing discharge of the tension in the centre reveals the weaknesses of his position.

15 P×P B×P
16 QR–Q1 Q–K2

Not 16 ..., Q–B2; 17 R×B, Kt×R; 18 P–QKt4, and 19 P–B5.

17 B×B Kt×B
18 Kt–K5!

Position after White's 18th move



White's advantage is determined by this move. Instead of the strong Bishop at B3 Black is left with a weak pawn and his Knights, deprived of Bishop support, are driven out of the centre. If now 18 ..., B×P; 19 K×B, Q–Kt4 ch; 20 Kt–Kt4.

18 ... KR–Q1
19 P–QKt4 Kt–Q2
20 Kt×B P×Kt
21 P–B5 Kt–K1

With this retreat Black condemns himself to passive defence, but it is doubtful whether the more active 21 ..., Kt–B4 would be better, because of: 22 Q–R4, KR–B1; 23 Kt–K4!, P–QR4; 24 Kt–Q6.

22 Q–R4 KR–B1
23 B–R6 R–B2
24 Kt–K4 Kt(Q2)–B3
25 Kt×Kt ch Q×Kt

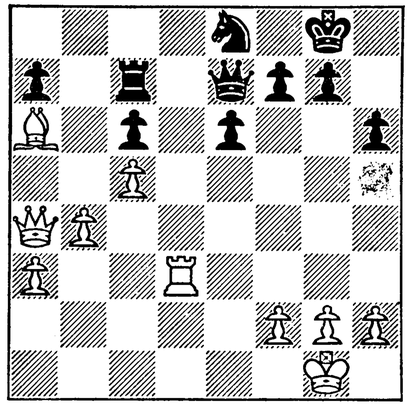
It is interesting that this natural move leads to a forced lose. But it has to be remarked that Black's position is now difficult to defend.

The other possible variation, 25 ..., Kt×Kt; planning Kt–Q4 after 26 R–Q6, Q–K1; 27 P–Kt5!, BP×P; 28 B×P, Q–K2; 29 Q–Q4 would also lead to a difficult situation for Black.

After the text move White seizes the Q file.

26 R–Q3! R–Q1
27 KR–Q1 R×R
28 R×R Q–K2

Position after Black's 28th move



Black is helpless! He cannot simultaneously defend himself against White's two threats: 29 Q–Q1, capturing the Q file; and 29 P–Kt5! E.g. 28 ..., Q–R8 ch; 29 R–Q1, Q–B3; 30 P–Kt5!, P×P (otherwise 31 P–Kt6); 31 B×P, and Black loses the Knight.

29 Q–Q1 K–R2
30 R–Q8 P–Kt3
31 P–Kt3 Kt–B3
32 Q–Q6 Kt–Q4

Now Black can move nothing but the King, and White has only to find the shortest road to victory. The Bishop's following manœuvre is this road.

33 B–B4 K–Kt2
34 B–Kt3 K–R2
35 B–R4 K–Kt2
36 R–QR8

Obviously, not at once 36 B×P, R×B; and White loses a piece. But now there is the threat of 37 B×P, Q×Q; 38 P×Q, R×B; 39 P–Q7, and White wins.

36 ... Q×Q
37 P×Q R–Q2
38 B×P R×P
39 B×Kt P×B

At this point the game was adjourned. After the obvious 40 R×P, P–Q5; 41 K–B1 two main variations are possible:

(1) 41 ..., R–K3; 42 P–Kt5, P–Q6; 43 R–Q7, R–K4; 44 P–QR4, R–K5; 45 P–R5, R–K4; 46 R×P, R×P; 47 R–R3 and wins.

(2) 41 ..., P–Q6; 42 K–K1, R–K3 ch; 43 K–Q1!, R–K7; 44 R–Q7, R×P; 45 R×P, R×P; 46 R–Kt3.

And so Black resigned without resuming play.

LENINGRAD–MOSCOW TRADE UNION MATCH

May

No. 13. *Nimzo-Indian Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*I. Kann* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4 Q–Kt3	P–B4
5 P×P	B×P

At this time the defence system beginning with 5 ..., Kt–QR3! followed by P–QKt3 was not yet known (see Game No. 15).

6 Kt–B3 Kt–B3

A passive plan of development.

7 B–Kt5 P–QKt3

Black underestimates White's ensuing reply. It would be risky to play 7 ..., Kt–QR4; 8 Q–B2 (8 Q–R4, Q–Kt3), Kt×P; 9 P–K4, etc., but probably the best move is 7 ..., Q–Kt3, forcing exchange of

queens. Of course, even now White's game is obviously the better.

8 P–K4 Kt–Q5

It is difficult to suggest anything better. E.g. after 8 ..., B–QKt2; 9 O–O–O, B×BP; 10 P–K5, P–KR3; 11 P×Kt, P×B; 12 P×P, R–Kt1; 13 Kt–K4 White has a decisive attack.

9 Kt×Kt B×Kt
10 P–B3

With this simple move, eliminating the threat of 10 ..., B×P ch White consolidates his advantage in the centre. Black's next move, obviously, is the only way of freeing the Kt at B3.

10 ... P–KR3
11 B–B4

Not so good is 11 B–R4, B×Kt ch; 12 P×B (12 Q×B, Kt×P) and the entire pawn position is spoilt. Now there is a threat of 12 Kt–Kt5 and 12 B–Q6.

11 ... P–K4
12 Kt–Kt5 Kt–R4

Forced. Bad would be 12 ..., P×B; 13 Kt×B; or 12 ..., B×KtP; 13 Q×B, P×B; 14 Q–R3!

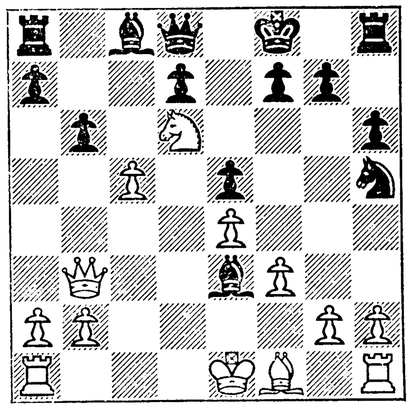
13 B–K3 B×B

After 13 ..., Q–R5 ch; 14 P–Kt3, Kt×P; 15 P×Kt, Q×R; 16 B×B, P×B; 17 Kt–B7 ch (or 17 Kt–Q6 ch, K–B1; 18 P–B5, Q–R4; 19 P–Kt4, Q–Kt3; 20 Q–Q5, QR–Kt1; 21 P×P, P×P; 22 R–B1), K–Q1; 18 Kt×R, B–Kt2; 19 Kt×P, P×Kt; 20 Q×P ch, K–B1; 21 K–B2! White should win.

14 Kt–Q6 ch K–B1
15 P–B5!

A very important intermediate move, threatening 16 Q×BP mate. If White were to play at once 15 Q×B, Black, by continuing 15 ..., Q–R5 ch; 16 Q–B2 (16 P–Kt3, followed by 16 ... Kt×P; 17 Q–B2, Q–B3! loses a pawn) could obtain an exchange of Queens.

Position after White's 15th move



15 ... Q–K2
16 Q×B Kt–B5
17 Q–R3

After this move Black must inevitably lose material, Because of the threat 18 P×P it is necessary for Black to take at B4, and this puts the Queen's Bishop in danger.

17 ... P×P
18 Q×BP K–Kt1

There is no other defence against 19 R–B1. But if at once 19 R–B1, then 19 ..., K–R2.

19 P–KKt3 Kt–Kt3
20 B–B4 K–R2
21 O–O–O

There is no hurry about taking the pawn at KB2; e.g. 21 ..., P–B3 is bad. 22 P–B4!.

The, to White, attractive move 21 Q–B7 (threatening 22 B–Q5) fails because of 21 ..., Kt–B1!; 22 Kt×B, Q–Kt5 ch; 23 K–B1, Kt–K3.

21 ... P–QR4
22 B×P B–R3
23 K–Kt1 ?

Played carelessly! Now Black can cause complications. The right move is 23 Q–R3, withdrawing the Queen from the threat of R–B1 and defending the KBP.

23 ... B–K7
24 R–Q5 B×P
25 B×Kt ch K×B
26 R×KP Q–B3
27 R–K1

Not 27 R–KB1 or 27 R–B5, because of 27 ..., B×P ch.

27 ... KR–QKt1
28 Kt–B5

Preparing to exchange Queens, which Black cannot prevent.

28 ... R–R3
29 Q–K7 Q×Q

Or at once 29 ..., R(R)–Kt3; 30 Kt–R4 ch, K–R2; 31 Q×Q, R×Q; 32 R×P, and White has two extra pawns.

30 R×Q

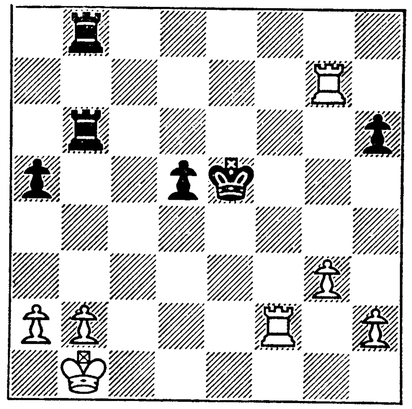
With an attack on the KKtP White forces further simplification advantageous to himself. 30 ..., R(R)–Kt3 may be followed by 31 P–Kt3, P–R5 (or 31 ..., B×P ch; 32 R(7)×B, K×Kt; 33 R–K5 ch and 34 R×P); 32 R–K3, B×P ch; 33 R×B, K×Kt; 34 R×P, etc.

30 ... B×P ch
31 R(1)×B K×Kt
32 R–B4 ch K–Kt3
33 R–Kt4 ch K–B4
34 R–B4 ch K–Kt3
35 R–Kt4 ch K–B4
36 R(Kt4)×KtP R–QKt3
37 R(Kt)–B7 ch K–Kt3
38 R–Kt7 ch

Black can reply to 38 R–B2 with 38 ..., R–Q3; with chances of a draw.

38 ... K–B4
39 R(K)–B7 ch! K–K4
40 R–B2 P–Q4

Position after Black's 40th move



The game was adjourned in this position. The match judges (N. Grigoriev and P. Romanovsky) awarded White the win, taking into account the following variations which I put forward. 41 R–K7 ch!, K–Q3; 42 R–QR7, R–Kt4; 43 R–R7, winning a second pawn. Or 41 ..., K–Q5; 42 R–Q2 ch, K–B4; 43 R–Q7 (also 43 R–B7 ch, K–Q3; 44 R–QR7, R–Kt4; 45 R–KR7), K–B3 (43 ..., R–Q3; 44 R–B2 ch); 44 R(7)×P, R×P ch; 45 R×R, R×R ch; 46 K×R, K×R; and White wins the pawn ending easily.

LENINGRAD–MOSCOW MATCH

November

No. 14. *Dutch Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*I. Kann* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–K3
2 P–QB4	P–KB4
3 Kt–KB3	B–Kt5 ch
4 B–Q2	B×B ch
5 Q×B	Kt–KB3
6 P–KKt3	P–QKt3

A mistake, after which Black runs into serious difficulties. As is well known, here it is necessary to aim at P–K4, to achieve which Black should play 6 ..., P–Q3.

7 Kt–B3 P–Q3

7 ..., B–Kt2 has the unpleasant reply 8 P–Q5 with an excellent game for White. But now 8 P–Q5 has the reply 8 ..., P–K4. Nor is there any advantage in 7 ..., Kt–K5; 8 Kt×Kt, P×Kt; 9 Kt–Kt5, P–Q4 (9 ..., B–Kt2; 10 Q–K3); 10 B–R3, Q–K2; 11 P×P.

8 B–Kt2 B–Kt2
9 O–O Q–K2

Consolidating K3. No benefit could be derived from 9 ..., O–O; 10 P–Q5!, P–K4; 11 Kt–KKt5, B–B1; 12 P–K4, Q–K2; 13 KP×P, B×P; 14 P–B4, etc.

10 P–Q5 P–K4

Otherwise 11 Kt–Q4.

11 P–K4!

The most energetic. There is nothing to be gained by 11 Kt–Kt5, QKt–Q2; 12 Kt–K6, Kt–B4 with an equal game.

11 ..., B–B1 could be followed by 12 P×P, B×P; 13 QR–K1, O–O; 14 Kt–Q4, B–Q2; 15 P–B4, with obvious superiority. So the continuation Black chooses is relatively the best. However, his game must already be regarded as unsatisfactory.

11 ... P×P
12 Kt–KKt5 QKt–Q2
13 QKt×P O–O

Also bad is 13 ..., Kt×Kt; 14 B×Kt, Kt–B3; 15 B–B5.

14 Kt–K6 Kt×Kt
15 B×Kt R–B3

No other way! Nothing comes of 15 ..., Kt–B3; 16 Kt×R, Kt×B; 17 Q–K3, Kt–Kt4 (or 17 ..., Kt–B4; 18 P–QKt4!); 18 P–B4! (but not 18 Kt–K6, Kt×Kt; 19 P×Kt, Q×P with an excellent game for Black) without sufficient compensation for loss of the exchange.

16 Q–B2

Of course, not at once Kt×QBP, because of 16 ..., R–QB1 and R×P(4). White attacks KRP and simultaneously defends the pawn at B4; Black has two pawns under threat, and he cannot defend both at once.

16 ... R–R3

Black overlooks a better possibility, consisting in the variation 16 ..., Kt–B1; 17 Kt×Kt, QR×Kt; 18 B×P ch, K–R1; 19 B–K4, B–B1; and although White should win, the exploitation of his extra pawn still involves great technical difficulties. Instead, Black seeks salvation in attack, which is predestined to failure.

17 Kt×QBP R–QB1
18 Kt–Kt5

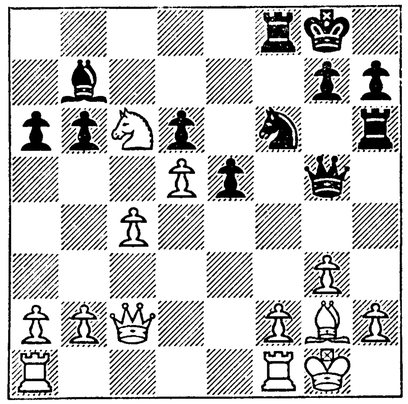
18 Kt–K6 would be a blunder, because of 18 ..., Kt–B3, after which White cannot escape simultaneously from two threats: (1) 19 ..., Kt×P, and (2) 19 ..., Kt×B; 20 Q×Kt, R×Kt.

18 ... P–QR3
19 Kt–R7 R–B1
20 Kt–B6 Q–Kt4

20 ..., Q–B2; 21 P–B4 is still worse.

21 B–Kt2 Kt–B3

Position after Black's 21st move



Allowing an amusing finish. It is possible for Black to resist longer by playing: 21 ..., B–B1. Against this move the following variation had been prepared: 22 QR–K1; Kt–B3; 23 P–B4, Q–R4; 24 P–KR4, P×P; 25 R×P, P–KKt4; 26 B–B3! and win.

22 Q–B5 Q–R4

Defeat follows at once after 22 ..., Q×Q; 23 Kt–K7 ch, K–R1; 24 Kt×Q, and 25 Kt×QP.

23 Q×Q Kt×Q

After 23 ..., R×Q; 24 B–B3, R–R6 (24 ..., R–Kt4; 25 P–R4); 25 K–Kt2, R–R3; 26 Kt–K7 ch, K–R1; 27 Kt–B5 Black loses another pawn.

24 P–B4! R–K1

Defending the pawn. Defeat also follows 24 ..., P×P; 25 P–KKt4!, P–B6; 26 P×Kt, P×B; 27 Kt–K7 ch, K–R1; 28 R×R mate. Or 25 ..., B×Kt; 26 P×B, P–B6; 27 P×Kt, P×B; 28 R×R ch, K×R; 29 P–B7, and 30 P–B8(Q).

25 QR–K1 B×Kt
26 P×B Kt–B3
27 P–KKt4 Kt×P
28 P×P Kt×KP
29 B–Q5 ch K–R1
30 P–B7 R–B3

Or 30 ..., R–QB1; 31 B–Kt7.

31 B–Kt7 Resigns

No. 15. *Nimzo-Indian Defence*

I. Kann (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–QB4	Kt–KB3
2 Kt–QB3	P–B4
3 Kt–B3	P–K3
4 P–Q4	P×P
5 Kt×P	B–Kt5
6 Q–Kt3	B–B4

It is difficult to indicate a better continuation here. After 6 ..., Kt–B3; 7 Kt×Kt, B×Kt ch; 8 Q×B, KtP×Kt; 9 B–Kt5, White's position is unquestionably preferable; but 6 ..., Kt–R3, 7 B–Kt5 leads only to transposition of moves as compared with the text game.

7 Kt–B3

In sum we have a variation of the Nimzo-Indian Defence analogous to Game No. 12. Of course, I too continued to defend in the same manner as Gotthilf, with the difference that I refrained from the unnecessary move P–Q3.

7 ... P–QKt3
8 B–Kt5 B–Kt2
9 Q–B2

Preparing P–K4, which is not sound at once because of 9 ..., P–KR3 (10 B–R4, P–KKt4; 11 B–Kt3, Kt×P).

9 ... P–KR3
10 B–R4 O–O
11 P–K4 B–K2
12 B–K2 Kt–R3
13 P–K5

Obviously the best. 13 O–O would be followed by 13 ..., Kt–B4, and White would not be in a state to hold K4, e.g. 14 Kt–Q2 (14 P–K5, Kt–K5), P–Q4; 15 KP×P (15 B×Kt, B×B; 16 KP×P, B×Kt; and 17 ..., P×P), Kt×P!; 16 B×B, Kt×B, with approximately equal game.

13 ... Kt–QKt5

If now 14 Q–Kt1 (to prevent 14 ..., Kt–K5) then 14 ..., Kt–R4; 15 B×B, Q×B; 16 P–KKt3 (otherwise 16 ..., Kt–B5), P–Q3; 17 O–O, P×P; 18 Kt×P, Kt–B3; and Black's game is no worse than White's.

14 Q–Q2 Kt–K5
15 Kt×Kt B×Kt
16 B×B Q×B
17 O–O QR–Q1
18 QR–Q1

A faulty move, transferring the initiative to Black. Stronger is

18 KR–Q1 or 18 Kt–Q4, Kt–B3 (18 ..., P–B3; 19 Kt–Kt5, Kt–B3; 20 Kt–Q6, B–Kt3; 21 P×P, R×P; 22 QR–Q1, with advantage to White) 19 Kt×Kt, with simplification of the position.

18 ... Kt×P
19 Kt–Q4

It would be disadvantageous to White to win back the pawn at once with 19 R–R1, Kt–Kt5; 20 R×P, because of 20 ..., Kt–B3; 21 R–R6, B×Kt; 22 P×B (22 B×B, Kt×P; 23 R×P, Kt×P), Kt×P; 23 R×P, P–Q4! But now, as the White Knight threatens an invasion of Q6, the Black Knight must hurriedly retreat.

19 ... Kt–Kt5
20 Kt–Kt5 Q–B4

Only thus! Bad for Black is 20 ..., Kt–B3; 21 Kt–Q6, B–Kt3 because of 22 P–B4 with the threat of 23 Kt–Kt7. Now White gains nothing from the continuation 21 Kt–Q6, B–R1. So he is compelled to take the QRP, regardless of the fact that his Knight is then out of play.

21 Kt×P P–B3

Here Black proposed to play: 21 ..., P–Q4; 22 P×P e.p., B–B7; 23 R–B1, R×P; but rejected this continuation at the last moment, noticing that after 23 P–Q7!, B×R; 24 R×B, it was not so easy to deal with the passed pawn at Q7.

22 P×P R×P
23 Q–Q4

Other possible variations, namely: 23 Kt–Kt5, P–Q4; 24 P×P, R×P; 25 Q–K3, Q×Q; 26 P×Q, R×R ch; 27 R×R, R–Q7; or 23 Q–Q6, P–K4; 24 Q×Q, P×Q; with the subsequent transfer of the Black Knight to Q5 are also not very favourable to White.

23 ... P–Q4
24 P×P P×P
25 Kt–Kt5 Kt–B3

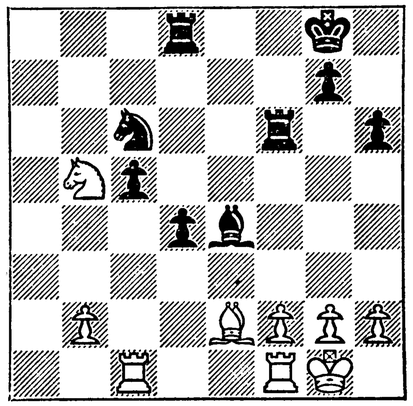
With this move Black unites his pawns, and secures a superior endgame.

26 Q×Q P×Q
27 R–B1

Leads to speedy defeat because of the forced march of the Black QP. A rather better move is 27 Kt–B3, Kt–Q5; 28 Kt×B, Kt×B ch; 29 K–R1, R–B3; but because of his passed pawn and the poor position of the enemy King Black would still have adequate prospects of a win.

27 ... P–Q5!

Position after Black's 27th move



28 P–B3

R×P at once results in a transposition of moves.

28 ... P–Q6
29 B–Q1

Or 29 P×B, P×B; 30 KR–K1 (30 R×R, R–Q8 ch), R–Q7; 31 Kt–B3 (31 R×P, R–Q8; 32 R–QB1, R–B8 ch), Kt–Q5.

29 ... P–Q7
30 R×P B–Q6
31 R–KB2 B×Kt
32 R×B R–K3
33 R–B1 R–K8
34 R–QB5

Swifter defeat would have followed on 34 K–B2, R(Q)–K1; 35 B–Kt3 ch, K–R1; 36 R–Q5, R(1)–K7 ch. After the text move Black could not play 34 ..., Kt–Q5, because of 35 K–B2, R(Q)–K1; 36 R–Q5! and White has the advantage.

34 ... Kt–Kt5
35 R–B4 Kt–Q4
36 R–K4 Kt–K6
37 R×Kt R×R
38 K–B2 R(Q)–K1
39 B–R4 R–K8
Resigns

NINETEEN THIRTY-ONE

In 1931 I took part in two big tournaments: during the winter in the Leningrad Championship, and in the autumn in the Seventh All-Union Championship, in Moscow.

In the Leningrad Championship I won first place easily, beating the runner up, P. Romanovsky, by 2½ points. The games from this tournament (Nos. 16, 17, 18) witness to my increased mastery. By now I had achieved no small successes in the study of chess, not excluding the opening game, but I had not yet learnt thoroughly how to prepare for competitions.

There were still periods when I could not give much time to chess; in the summer I worked for some six weeks or so on the Dnieper Construction Works, doing practical work as a student. Naturally, this was a dubious sort of preparation for the forthcoming All-Union Championship.

It was not surprising that even in the semi-finals I stumbled and lost two games in succession. Only with my win over G. Kasparyan (Game 19) did I put my affairs in good order, but even so I had to be satisfied with second place, Kasparyan being first.

In the finals of the tournament I started badly: my lose in the first round to Ilyin-Zhenevsky, who simply made mincemeat of me, and my further lose in the seventh round, put me 1½ points behind the leader, Master N. Riumin. But then I got a move on and, collecting 6½ points out of a possible seven, drew up quite close to the leader. We met in the 15th round (Game No. 24). Speculation rose to a great height: all chess Moscow was on the side of its talented champion, Riumin. However, he went in for great complications without adequate justification and lost the deciding game. So I managed to win the coveted title of Champion of the U.S.S.R.

LENINGRAD CHAMPIONSHIP

March

No. 16. *Nimzo-Indian Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*G. Myasoyedov* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4 Q–Kt3	P–B4
5 P×P	Kt–B3
6 Kt–B3	Kt–K5
7 B–Q2	Kt×QBP
8 Q–B2	P–B4

9 P–QR3 B×Kt
10 B×B O–O
11 P–QKt4 Kt–K5

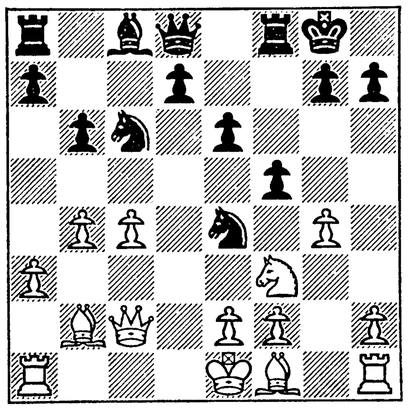
So far, as in the Stahlberg–Alekhine game (Hamburg, 1930), which ended in White's defeat. In commenting on that game Kmoch pointed out that instead of the 12 P–K3 which was played the best continuation was 12 B–Kt2, P–QKt3, though this also was in Black's favour. The present game seems to show that even in that case Black's game is no better.

12 B–Kt2 P–QKt3

Simpler would have been 12 ..., P–Q3, as in the game Winter–Sultan-Khan (Hastings, Christmas 1930). But now a little surprise awaits Black.

13 P–Kt4

Position after White's 13th move



This interesting move had been previously studied in home analysis and, now at last, applied in practice.

If I had foreseen what complications this novelty would lead to I would in all probability have given my preference to the calm continuation 13 P–Kt3.

13 ... Kt×BP!

All other continuations led to opening up the Knight file, after which White's position, with the Bishop at QKt2 and the Rook at KKt1 would look threatening.

For that matter, White had taken this Knight sacrifice also into account. I foresaw that Black would not be able to recapture, and ended my analysis at that. But, as often happens, mistakes occur in home analysis too, to be refuted by actual play. White does in fact retain his piece, but he comes under strong attack.

14 K×Kt P×P
15 KR–Kt1 Q–R5 ch
16 K–K3

It is easy to see that this is now the only move; if, e.g. 16 R–Kt3; 16 ..., P×Kt; 17 K–Kt1, Kt–Q5! Or 16 K–Kt2, P×Kt ch; 17 K–R1, Kt–Q5! to Black's advantage.

16 ... Q–R3 ch
17 K–B2 Q–R5 ch

Black is compelled to resort to perpetual check. A false scent would be 17 ..., Q×P ch; 18 R–Kt2! Or 17 ..., P×Kt; 18 R×P ch, Q×R; 19 B×Q, and White alone would gain.

18 K–K3 Q–R3 ch
19 K–Q3

This is the very position White had studied, regarding it as favourable to himself. However, at the board, only after great hesitation did he decide on taking the King for such a daring walk.

19 ... P–Q4!

The strongest move! There was nothing good to be obtained from 19 ..., Q–Kt3 ch; 20 K–Q2; or 19 ..., P–K4; 20 Q–Q2!, Q–Q3 ch; 21 K–B2.

20 Q–B1!

The only reply, securing the King's retreat. Not 20 Q–Q2, Q–Kt3 ch; 21 K–B3, Q–K5!; 22 Q–Kt5, P–K4! and White's position is critical.

Now it may appear that White is getting out of the wood, but Black, consistently developing his attack on the White King, in the final resort achieves perpetual check.

20 ... P×P ch!
21 Q×P

21 K×P is bad; R–B5 ch; 22 K–Kt3, P–K4! But it was worth considering 21 K–B2 (leaving the B file closed) though Black's three pawns for the piece made this continuation unconvincing.

21 ... R–Q1 ch
22 K–B2 B–Kt2
23 Q×KtP

If 23 R×P, 23 ... QR–B1; 24 B×P (24 R×P ch, Q×R; 25 B×Q, Kt×P ch; 26 K–Kt3, R×Q; 27 K×R, Kt–B7), Kt×P ch; 25 K–Kt3, R×Q; 26 B×Q, R×R; and then too the game would probably have ended in a draw.

But now the threat Q×KtP ch drives Black into the following combination, forcing a draw.

23 ... Kt×P ch!
24 P×Kt

Agreeing to the draw, as the continuation 24 Q×Kt, QR–B1 ch; 25 B–B3, B×Kt; 26 P×B, P–R4!; followed by 27 ..., Q–Q7 ch; or 27 ..., R–Q7 ch led rather to Black's advantage. Or 26 R–Q1, R×B ch; 27 Q×R, B–K5 ch; 28 R–Q3, R×R! (28 ..., B×R ch; 29 P×B, Q×P ch; 30 R–Kt2, Q–R3; 31 B–K2, in White's favour); 29 P×R, Q×P ch; 30 B–Kt2, B×B with advantage to Black.

24 ... QR–B1 ch
25 B–B3 R×B ch
26 K×R Q–K6 ch
27 K–Kt2 R–Q7 ch
28 Kt×R Q×Kt ch
29 K–Kt1 Q–Q8 ch
30 K–Kt2 Q–Q7 ch

Drawn.

A brain-racking game.

No. 17. *Queen's Gambit Declined*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*A. Batuyev* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	Kt–KB3
4 B–Kt5	B–K2
5 P–K3	O–O
6 Kt–B3	QKt–Q2
7 B–Q3	

Here 7 R–B1 is more often played, but White is deliberately avoiding stereotyped variations.

7 ... P×P
8 B×P P–B4

This continuation, recommended by the chess primers, is apparently sufficient to equalize the game. The preliminary 8 ..., P–QR3 was also worth considering.

9 O–O P×P
10 P×P

After 10 Kt×P a symmetrical pawn position is formed, and it is then not so difficult for Black to equalize the game. But now White has a certain preponderance in the centre, though, truly, at the cost of an isolated pawn.

10 ... Kt–Kt3
11 B–Kt3 Kt(Kt)–Q4

Black wants to develop his QB to Kt2. Of course it is possible to play immediately 11 ..., B–Q2. With his next move White temporarily prevents 12 ..., P–QKt3.

12 Kt–K5 Kt–Q2

Here too 12 ..., B–Q2 is possible. But Black is aiming at exchanging off the White Queen's Bishop, in order to weaken White's Q4 pawn still more. It is difficult for White to avoid the exchange.

13 B×B Kt×B
14 Q–K2

Strong, too, is 14 Kt–K4, exploiting the weak black squares.

14 ... Kt(Q2)–B3
15 KR–Q1 P–QKt3
16 QR–B1 B–Kt2
17 P–B3!

Black intends to transfer his Knight at K2 through Q4 to KB5 with pressure on the KtP. White forestalls this danger and simultaneously sets up a strong point for the Knight in the centre. In this game the Knight sacrifice met with in such positions —17 Kt×P, R×Kt; 18 Q×P —proves unsound after 18 ..., Kt(K2)–Q4. Now Black should have played 17 ..., Kt(K2)–Q4; 18 Kt–K4, R–B1; 19 R×R, B×R; 20 B–B2 with approximately equal game. Instead he makes a decisive mistake.

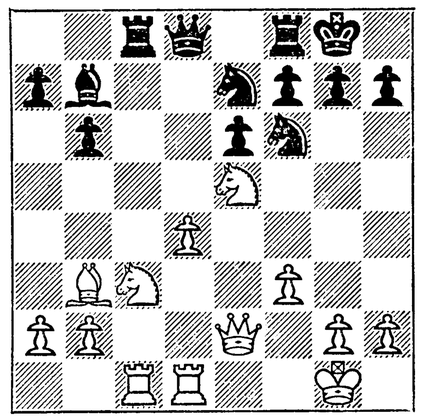
17 ... R–B1
18 Kt×P! R×Kt
19 Q×P Q–B1

Forced, as now he cannot play 19 ..., Kt(K2)–Q4; 20 Kt×Kt, Kt×Kt; 21 B×Kt, B×B; 22 R×R, and White wins.

20 Kt–K4 R×R
21 R×R Kt(B)–Q4

There was a threat of 22 Q×R ch, Q×Q; 23 B×Q ch, K×B; 24 Kt–Q6 ch.

Position after Black's 17th move



22 Kt–Q6 B–R1
23 R–K1!

Black is helpless against 24 Kt×R followed by capture of the Knight at K2.

23 ... P–Kt3
24 Kt×R Q×Kt
25 Q×Kt(K) Resigns

No. 18. *Queen's Indian Defence*

V. Chekhover (White) — *M. Botvinnik* (Black)

1 P–Q4 Kt–KB3
2 Kt–KB3 P–QKt3
3 P–KKt3 B–Kt2
4 B–Kt2 P–Kt3

I should have given preference to 4 ..., P–B4; 5 O–O, P×P; 6 Kt×P, B×B; 7 K×B, P–Kt3 with equal game.

5 O–O B–Kt2
6 P–B4 O–O
7 QKt–Q2

Bad. Now Black manages to open the KR1–QR8 diagonal and thus to hinder the development of the Bishop to QKt2; in addition, White has closed the B1–R6 diagonal to his Bishop. The right move is 7 Q–B2 (if at once 7 Kt–B3, it is followed by Kt–K5!, Rabinovich–Ilyin-Zhenevsky, Leningrad, 1926) then Kt–B3, and P–K4 as occasion arises, and probably White would gain some advantage.

7 ... P–B4!
8 P–Q5 P–K3
9 P–K4 P×P

Here Blumenfeld's idea would not succeed: 9 ..., P–QKt4; 10 QP×P, BP×P; 11 P–K5! (11 P×P, Kt×P; 12 Kt–Kt5, Kt–B6!; 13 P×Kt, B×B; and 14 ..., Q×Kt), Kt–Kt5; 12 P×P, Kt×KP; 13 Kt×Kt, B×B; 14 K×B, B×Kt; 15 Kt–B4, B–Kt2; 16 Q–Q6.

10 BP×P

White apparently assumed that his position was quite satisfactory. That would be so if the Kt was at B3, not Q2. He should have played 10 KP×P, P–Kt4; 11 Kt–R4, not allowing Black Q-side pawn majority. But now Black gets an extra pawn on the Q side with the Bishop excellently posted at KKt2. White's preponderance in the centre is easily neutralized.

10 ... P–Q3
11 R–K1

To free the Knight from defence of the KP.

11 ... R–K1
12 Kt–R4 Q–K2

An important move! White had intended to play 13 P–B4, but, in view of the threat 13 ..., Kt×QP, he is now forced to block the advance of his BP with the Knight.

13 Kt(Q2)–B3 QKt–Q2

Both now and later 13 ..., Kt×KP; 14 Kt–Kt5! would be only to White's advantage.

14 B–Q2 P–QKt4

Black has completed his development and begins his advance on the Q side, where he has three pawns against two. Obviously, White's only counter-chance is an attack on the K side, as he is impotent on the Q side. White tries to put this plan into effect, but with his next move he loses a tempo.

15 Q–B1 Q–B1

Attacking the KP.

16 Q–B2 P–QR4
17 P–KR3 P–Kt5
18 Kt–R2 B–QR3
19 P–B4 Kt–R4!

A little unpleasantness: it transpires that White cannot play either 20 Kt–B1, B×Kt; or 20 P–Kt4, B–Q5 ch!; 21 B–K3, Kt×BP. None the less salvation is found.

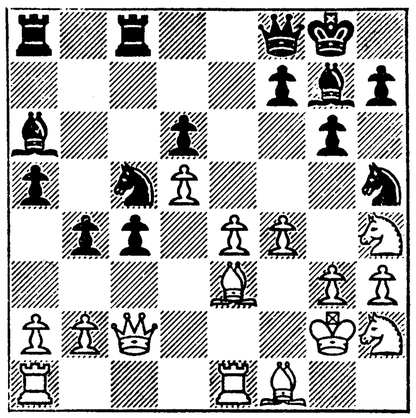
20 B–KB1! P–B5

Not 20 ..., Kt×KtP; 21 B×B, R×B; 22 Q–Q3!

Now White is forced to defend with his King, as after the immediate 21 P–Kt4 comes 21 ..., Kt–Kt6; 22 B–Kt2, Kt–QB4!; 23 K–B2, P–Kt6; 24 Q–Kt1, P–B6! then B–Q6 and Kt×KP ch.

21 K–Kt2 R(K)–B1
22 B–K3 Kt–B4

Position after Black's 22nd move



Positionally Black's game is won; on the Q side he has gained a real advantage, while White is not yet prepared for attack on the K side. Already Black could strike a decisive blow with 22 ..., P–Kt6! E.g. 23 P×P, P–B6; 24 B×B, P×P; 25 B×R, P×R(Q); 26 R×Q, R×B and there can be no doubt as

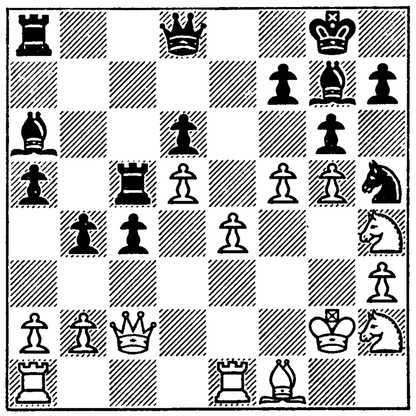
to the result. But Black's position is so strong that he can afford to take his time.

23 P–Kt4 Kt–B3
24 B×Kt R×B
25 P–Kt5

White hastens to exploit the breathing-space and to renew his attack on the King, interrupted by Black's operations on the Q side.

25 ... Kt–R4
26 P–B5 Q–Q1

Position after Black's 26th move



The simplest! Other continuations also would win, probably.

27 P–B6 Kt×P!

Sacrificing the piece, Black transposes to a won endgame.

28 P×Kt Q×P
29 Kt(4)–B3 Q×P
30 Q×Q B×Q
31 QR–Kt1 P–B6

This move has the defect that it blocks the Bishop at Kt7. So it would have been more exact to play first B–Kt2 and then P–B6. The next six moves were made under acute time-trouble on both sides.

32 B×B R×B
33 Kt–Q4 P–R5
34 R–KB1 P–R6
35 R–B2 R–R2

The immediate break-through 35 ..., P–Kt6; 36 Kt×P, P–B7; 37 R(Kt)–KB1, P–B8(Q); 38 Kt×Q, B×Kt; also leads to the win.

36 R(Kt)–KB1 R–B5
37 Kt–B6 R–B2
38 P–K5

The sealed move. Defeat follows 38 R–B2, P–Kt6!; 39 P×P, R(5)×Kt; 40 P×R, P–R7; 41 Kt–Kt4, R×P; then 42 ..., P–R8(Q) and Black has two extra pawns.

38 ... P×P
39 Kt×P P–B7!

39 ..., R–Q5; 40 Kt(R)–Kt4 would lead to unnecessary complications.

40 Kt×R R×Kt
41 R×P(7) P–B8(Q)
42 R–B8 ch K–Kt2
43 R(8)–B7 ch K–R3
44 R×Q R×R
45 Kt–Kt4 ch K–Kt4
46 P–Q6

If 46 R–QKt7, 46 ..., R–B7 ch; 47 K–B1 (47 K–B3, R–B6 ch; and 48 ..., P–Kt6), B–B6 and win.

46 ... P–Kt6
47 P–Q7 R–Q8
48 K–Kt3!

An amusing little trap! Threatening 49 P–R4 ch, K–R4; R×P mate. After 48 ..., R–Q6 ch; 49 R–B3, R×P; 50 R×P Black would have to play a prolonged endgame. But he has a no less interesting move at his own disposition.

48 ... P–R3!

This immediately decides the game, as after 49 P–R4 ch, K–R4; 50 R–R7, R–Q6 ch! (50 ..., B–Kt2 leads to a mate rarely met with: 51 R×P ch, B×R; 52 Kt–B6 mate); 51 K–B4, B–B8 ch; 52 K–K4, R×P; 53 R×R, P×P White should lay down his arms.

49 R–B3 P×P
Resigns

U.S.S.R. CHAMPIONSHIP

Semi-Finals

October

No. 19. *Queen's Gambit Declined*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*G. Kasparyan* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	Kt–KB3
4 Kt–B3	QKt–Q2
5 B–B4	

Only in order to avoid the stereotyped continuation. However, this move is not without purpose: it is more difficult for Black to simplify the game than after 5 B–Kt5, or to carry out the Pillsbury attack (on QB3).

The variation 5 ..., P×P; 6 P–K3, Kt–Q4; 7 KB×P, Kt×B; 8 P×Kt, Kt–Kt3; 9 O–O is regarded as advantageous to White. In this game Black seeks new roads.

5 ... B–Kt5

After all Black follows the Pillsbury system; but, after the correct reply 6 P×P! P×P (6 ..., Kt×P; 7 B–Q2); 7 P–K3 he would be unable to organize an attack on QB3. With his next move White cuts off his Bishop at KB4 from Q2 and makes it possible for Black to obtain a practically equal game.

6 P–K3 O–O
7 Q–Kt3 P–B4
8 P–QR3

It is necessary to relieve the tension, otherwise 8 ..., Kt–K5 and Q–R4 could be very unpleasant.

8 ... Q–R4

A faulty manœuvre, enabling White to obtain an advantageous endgame. The correct move is 8 ..., B×Kt ch!; 9 P×B (or 9 Q×B, Kt–K5; and 10 ..., Q–R4 ch) maintaining the tension.

9 R–B1 B×Kt ch
10 Q×B

Unquestionably the strongest. After 10 P×B, P–QKt3! Black has the initiative on the Q side. On the contrary, in the endgame which now follows White's game is to be preferred, owing to the pair of Bishops and the strong central pawns.

10 ... Q×Q ch
11 P×Q P–QKt3
12 BP×P Kt×P

After 12 ..., KP×P the Queen's Bishop has little scope. In addition, Black's only possibilities in the centre are by pressure with pieces.

13 B–Kt3

There is nothing in 13 B–Q6, R–Q1; 14 B–Kt5, B–Kt2; 15 B×Kt, R×B; 16 P×P, R–B1; and Black is excellently developed.

13 ... B–Kt2
14 B–Kt5 Kt(4)–B3

Black is playing very cautiously. It is unsafe to play 14 ..., KR–Q1; 15 B–R4, Kt(4)–B3; 16 Kt–K5! with advantageous complications.

15 K–K2 P–QR3
16 B–Q3 KR–QB1
17 KR–Q1

Negligence. The sound move is 17 P–B4 at once, safeguarding his QB3.

17 ... Kt–K5

Exactly! A threat of 18 ..., P×P, and 19 ..., Kt×QBP ch, to avoid which White has to permit the exchange of his excellently posted Queen's Bishop.

18 P–B4 B–B3

Why Black did not play 18 ..., Kt×B ch, approximately equalizing the game, is incomprehensible. Now

his game gradually passes into a crisis. White saves his Bishop, and then squeezes the Black pieces out of their central positions, while methodically strengthening his own position.

19 B–B4 P–B3
20 P–KR4 P–R3
21 B–R2

An attempt to play 21 P–Q5, P×P; 22 P×P, counting on 22 ..., B×P; 23 B×Kt, and 24 R×Kt would here (and at preceding moves) be fruitless because of 22 ..., B–Kt4!

21 ... R–R2
22 Kt–K1 P–B4

A new weakening, forced, however, by the threat of losing the Knight.

23 P–B3 Kt(K5)–B3
24 R–Q2 P–QKt4

For general positional reasons Black should have refrained from this break-through, as it is well known that in open positions two Bishops are particularly strong.

25 QP×P P×P
26 B×P Kt×P
27 B–Q6 Kt(B)–Q2

The only way to defend the K3 pawn.

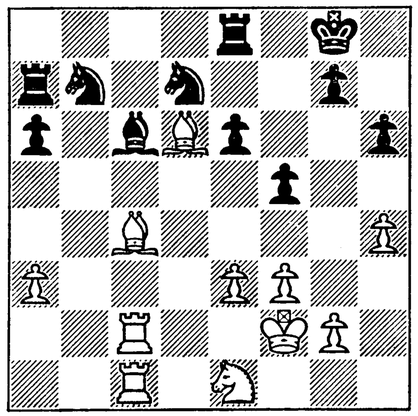
28 R(Q)–B2 R–K1

A shrewd defence against the threat of 29 B×P ch, winning a pawn. Now 29 B×Kt, Kt×B; 30 B×P ch is followed by 30 ..., Kt×B; 31 R×B, Kt–Q5 ch! and Black wins.

29 K–B2 Kt–Kt2

This loses immediately. However, it is doubtful whether any other continuation, e.g. 29 ..., B–R5 would save Black.

Position after Black's 29th move



30 B–QR2!

This cunning move escaped Black's notice. His Bishop cannot retreat, as then 31 R–B7! and Black is paralysed.

30 ... Kt×B
31 R×B Kt–B2
32 B×P Kt(Q2)–K4
33 R–B8 R(R)–K2
34 R×R ch R×R
35 B×P Resigns

Despite the early exchange of Queens the game was of a fighting nature to the end.

U.S.S.R. CHAMPIONSHIP

October

No. 20. *Queen's Gambit Declined*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*N. Sorokin* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 Kt–KB3	Kt–KB3
3 P–B4	P–K3
4 Kt–B3	QKt–Q2
5 B–Kt5	B–K2
6 P–K3	O–O
7 B–Q3	P–B3

Strictly speaking, this move is unsound. It should be made only after White has played R–QB1.

Theory recommends 7 ..., P×P; 8 B×P, P–B4 with approximately

equal game. After Black has himself played P–B3 White of course does not develop the Rook, but Castles, which in the given position is much more useful.

8 O–O P–QR3

It is possible that Black intended later to play P×P and P–QKt4, but most probably he was planning the variation 9 ..., P–QKt4; 10 P×P, BP×P. However, White's next move puts difficulties in the way of both these possibilities.

9 P–QR4 P×P
10 B×P P–B4

The cause of all Black's later difficulties. The move is bad for the following reasons: after the exchange Black must recapture the pawn with a developed piece, so losing time; in addition, White will succeed in occupying the Q file. The superiority in White's development will be still further increased because Black on the one hand must try to get rid of the unpleasant Bishop at Kt5, and on the other hand must hinder the moves P–K4–K5. Here 10 ..., Kt–Q4 is better.

11 P×P B×P

Perhaps 11 ..., Kt×P is a little better.

12 Q–K2 P–R3
13 B–R4 B–K2
14 KR–Q1 Kt–R4

Thus Black obtains an exchange of Bishops; 15 Kt–K5 is now not so dangerous for him, if only because of 15 ..., B×B; 16 Q×Kt, Q–K2; 17 Kt×Kt, B×Kt; 18 R×B, B×P ch.

15 B×B Q×B
16 R–Q2

Now it is clear that Black has not succeeded in preventing White from realizing his plan.

16 ... Kt–Kt3
17 QR–Q1 Q–B4

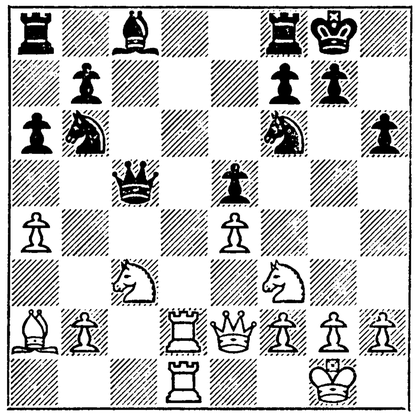
17 ..., B–Q2 might have been followed by 18 Kt–K5, Kt–B3; 19 P–R5, Kt×B; 20 R×B, Kt(KB3)×R; 21 R×Kt, and 22 Q×Kt or 22 Kt×Kt. Meanwhile White threatened 18 R–Q6, which would have followed also 17 ..., P–K4.

Also weaker is 17 ..., Q–Kt5, because of the simple 18 R–Q4.

18 B–R2 Kt–B3
19 P–K4 P–K4

Black could not allow P–K5. Now by way of B–Kt5 or B–K3 he prepares to solve the urgent problem of developing his Queen's Bishop.

Position after Black's 19th move



20 Q–K3!

This far from obvious move is the strongest in the given position. With the exchange of Queens, which he cannot avoid, the defects of Black's position grow more perceptible. In view of the backwardness of his development Black now certainly cannot oppose anything to the pressure along the Q file. His KP becomes very weak. To defend it Black finds himself forced to exchange a Bishop for the Knight at B3, after which not only his Q side but square KB2 is weakened.

The doubling of white pawns on the K file is of no essential importance.

20 ... Q×Q
21 P×Q B–Kt5
22 P–R5 Kt–B1

It is doubtful whether 22 ..., Kt(Kt3)–Q2 would be better. It could be followed by 23 P–R3, B×Kt; 24 P×B, Kt–B4 (24 ..., R(B)–Q1; 25 Kt–Q5!); 25 P–Kt4, Kt–K3; 26 B×Kt, P×B; 27 Kt–R4! and 28 Kt–B5 with an excellent game.

23 R–QB1

Renewing the attack on the KP.

23 ... B×Kt

Sad though it be, the exchange is necessary. After 23 ..., R–K1 White could play 24 P–R3, B–R4 (24 ..., B–K3; 25 B×B, R×B; 26 R–Q8 ch); 25 Kt–R4! and the threat P–KKt4 is very unpleasant.

24 P×B Kt–K2
25 Kt–Q5

White provokes a further exchange, finally establishing his advantage. If now 25 ..., Kt(B)×Kt; counting on 26 P×Kt, Kt–B4; 27 P–K4, Kt–Q3, it is simplest of all for White to reply: 26 B×Kt, and if 26 ..., Kt×B, he has a won Rook endgame.

Black's next move is fatal to him owing to the weakness of his KB2.

25 ... Kt–B3
26 Kt×Kt ch P×Kt
27 R–Q7 QR–Kt1

Or at once 27 ..., Kt×P; 28 R(B)–B7. Black still defends KB2.

28 K–B2!

After this Black must admit that he cannot save the KB2 pawn, as there is no defence against the threat 29 R–KKt1 ch and 30 B×P.

28 ... Kt×P
29 R(B)–B7 R(Kt)–B1
30 R×BP R(QB1)×R
31 R×R(QB7) dis. ch K–R1
32 B–Q5 P–Kt4

Black allows his Knight to be stultified; but after 32 ..., Kt–B3; 33 R×P he loses more pawns. 32 ..., R–Kt1 is followed simply by 33 R–B7.

33 P–Kt3 R–Q1
34 K–Kt3

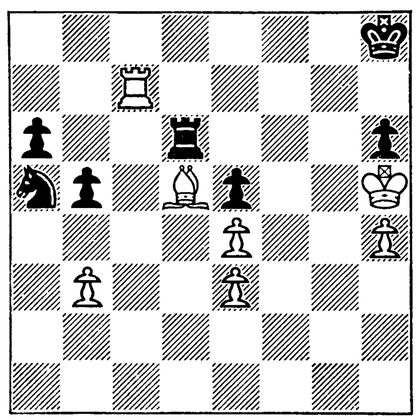
Another possibility is 34 R–B7, R–Q3; 35 K–Kt3, Kt–B3; 36 K–Kt4. But White does not want the Black Knight to come into play.

34 ... P–B4
35 K–R4 P×P
36 P×P R–Q3
37 K–R5 R–KB3
38 P–R3 R–Q3
39 P–R4 R–QKt3
40 K–Kt4 R–KB3
41 R–R7 R–Kt3
42 R–K7 R–Q3
43 R–QB7 R–KB3
44 R–R7 R–Kt3

Of course, White's repetition was in order to gain time for consideration. Now he puts his plan into effect.

45 R–QB7 R–KB3
46 K–R5 R–Q3

Position after Black's 46th move



47 B–B7! R–KB3

Not 47 ..., K–Kt2 because of 48 P–Kt4! and the unlucky Knight is lost! The Bishop is transferred to Kt6, after which the King is caught in the net.

48 B–Kt6 Kt×P
49 K×P R–B1

Loses at once. The "normal" course of events would be 49 ..., K–Kt1; 50 K–Kt5, R–B8; 51 P–R5! and Black is helpless against the RP.

50 R–R7 ch K–Kt1
51 R–Kt7 ch K–R1
52 B–B7 R×B
53 R×R K–Kt1
54 K–Kt6 Kt–Q7
55 R–Q7 Resigns

No. 21. *King's Indian Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*V. Alatortsev* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–KKt3
3 P–B3	B–Kt2

To-day no one is afraid of 3 P–B3, as it is known that the variation 3 ..., P–Q4!; 4 P×P, Kt×P; 5 P–K4, Kt–Kt3 leads to an equal game, owing to the weakness of the White QP. But when this game was played 3 P–B3 was a menacing weapon.

4 P–K4 P–Q3
5 Kt–B3 O–O
6 B–K3 P–K4
7 KKt–K2

To-day everybody knows that here it is sound for White to play 7 P–Q5, as recommended by V. Makogonov. After 7 Kt–K2 Black can continue best of all as Pirc played in a game with Euwe (Hastings, 1938/39). 7 ..., KP×P!; 8 Kt×P, P–B3; and the threat of P–Q4 gives Black counter-play. Black's text move leads to a difficult game for him.

7 ... Kt–B3
8 Q–Q2 Kt–Q2

Black has in mind after 9 O–O–O to continue 9 ..., Kt–Kt3; 10 P–QKt3, P×P; 11 Kt×P, P–QR4! with the initiative. So White closes up the centre, intending to organize an attack on the Black King.

9 P–Q5 Kt–K2

9 ..., Kt–Kt1 is preferable, to transfer the Knight to QB4.

10 P–KKt3!

For a pawn attack it would of course be more convenient to advance the KKt pawn two squares; but then after 10 ..., P–B4! (threatening the unpleasant P–B5) Black would force an exchange at KB4, and his pieces would be freed.

P–B4 is not dangerous in itself. For White it is important only to hinder the further advance of the KBP and not himself to exchange at B4. If he succeeds in maintaining the existing pawn formation, which greatly cramps Black's pieces, his superiority will be unquestionable. The text move meets all these requirements.

10 ... P–KB4
11 B–Kt2 P×P

Black still does not realize that his pieces are almost in *zugszwang*. This exchange is entirely in White's favour as it at once clears up the position in the centre. Having the worse position, Black should have aimed at complicating the struggle, by continuing 11 ..., Kt–KB3.

12 P×P Kt–KB3
13 P–KR3

To prevent Kt–Kt5. 13 ..., Kt–R4 would be met simply by 14 P–Kt4.

13 ... P–Kt3
14 P–Kt3 K–R1
15 P–KKt4!

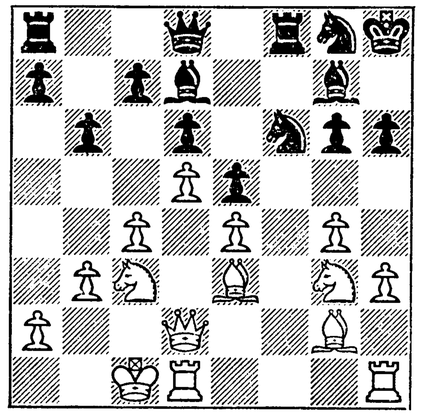
The signal for attack! White should not be in a hurry to Castle, as it would provoke Black's counter-attack on the Q side. But if Black

begins operations on the Q side before White Castles long, White is able to change his plan, to Castle short and exploit Black's weakness on the Q side.

The manœuvre Black has undertaken (K–R1, Kt–Kt1) does not do much to strengthen the K side. On the contrary, on the R file the King is more in danger than on the Kt file; however, Black aimed to control his KR3.

15 ... Kt(K2)–Kt1
16 Kt–Kt3 B–Q2
17 O–O–O P–KR3

Position after Black's 17th move



It was now, when White had Castled, that Black's operations should have begun on the Q side. True, White's attack, (Q–K2, P–Kt5 and P–KR4–R5) would develop much faster, but even so the refusal to counter-attack greatly simplifies White's task.

18 P–Kt5 P×P

The continuation 18 ..., Kt–R2; 19 P×P, B–KB3 surrenders a pawn, but it defends the King most reliably of all.

19 P–KR4

The simple B×KKtP is also playable.

19 ... B–Kt5

Loses at once. He should have displayed sangfroid and decided on 19 ..., P–Kt5; 20 P–R5, K–R2; relying on the pawn at Kt5 to hold up White's attack for a time. But even in this case it is doubtful whether Black could have held out for long; e.g. 21 P×P ch, K×P; 22 QR–KB1.

20 P×P dis. ch Kt–R4
21 Kt(B3)–K2

Preventing any propitiatory sacrifices on the lines of R–KB5.

21 ... Kt–K2
22 R–R4 Q–Q2
23 R(Q)–R1 K–Kt1
24 R×B

The simplest.

24 ... Q×R
25 B–R3 Q–B6
26 R–B1 Kt×Kt
27 B–K6 ch

Black resigns, as after 27 ..., K–R1; 28 R×Q, R×R; 29 Kt×Kt, there is no defence against 30 Q–R2 ch.

No. 22. *Dutch Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White) — *I. Kann* (Black)

1 P–Q4 P–K3

If Black wishes to play the Dutch Defence, this move is almost obligatory. If he plays immediately 1 ..., P–KB4 White has the dangerous Staunton gambit at his disposal: 2 P–K4!, P×P; 3 Kt–QB3, Kt–KB3; 4 B–Kt5, P–QB3; 5 P–B3!, P×P; 6 Kt×P, P–Q3; 7 B–QB4! with White excellently developed and having a good attack in exchange for a pawn.

2 P–QB4 P–KB4
3 P–KKt3 Kt–KB3
4 B–Kt2 B–K2

Theory also recommends 4 ..., B–Kt5 ch, exchanging the Bishop and preparing the later move P–K4.

The continuation Black has chosen is usually associated with P–Q4. In this game Black played P–Q3, following the example of Ilyin-Zhenevsky, who had applied this defence with some success.

5 Kt–KB3 P–Q3
6 O–O O–O
7 P–QKt3

This is the move usually chosen by Ilyin-Zhenevsky's opponents, the object being to prevent Black's P–K4. However, they usually develop the Bishop at QKt2, not R3, as in the present game. Developing the Bishop at R3 must be regarded as superior, as then White not only renders P–K4 difficult, but also develops the QKt not at Q2, but at QB3, where it is more active.

7 ... Q–K1

The Queen posted at K1, characteristic of the Dutch Defence, was an indispensable link in Ilyin-Zhenevsky's system. The Bishop for defence of the B2 pawn can retreat to Q1, leaving the Queen the possibility from K1 of taking part in preparation for P–K4.

8 Q–B2 Q–R4

Also possible is 8 ..., B–Q1; 9 B–QR3, Kt–B3; 10 Kt–B3, P–K4; 11 P×P, Kt×P; 12 Kt×Kt, Q×Kt; 13 QR–Q1, but in this variation Black's defence of the QKt pawn is rendered difficult. At first glance Black by the text move renounces the basic idea of advancing his central pawn, but in reality this is not so; Black's plan includes Kt–B3, B–Q2, QR–K1, B–Q1, and P–K4.

9 Kt–B3 Kt–B3
10 B–QR3 B–Q2

Here Black should have played 10 ..., P–R4! preparing Kt–Kt5. At this time this manœuvre was not thought of.

It may seem strange that White so obstinately refuses to play P–K4. For it is known that a successful opening up of the centre by way of P–K4 always gives White a tangible advantage in the Dutch Defence. That is unsound only when White's Queen's Bishop is at R3, for there it is undefended. E.g. 11 P–K4, P×P; 12 Kt×P, Kt×Kt; 13 Q×Kt, P–Q4! and White loses a piece.

However, there is no necessity for White to try for P–K4; he has other no less powerful possibilities at his command.

11 P–Q5! Kt–Q1

The Knight has to retreat, for 11 ..., Kt–K4 loses a piece.

12 Kt–K5

Attracted by the superiority of two Bishops over Bishop and Knight, White allows his opponent a breathing-space. He should have continued 12 QR–Q1, increasing the pressure.

12 ... P×Kt

12 ..., B–B1 is a quite joyless outlook.

13 B×B R–B2
14 B–R3

Nothing better presents itself. If 14 B×Kt(Q), R×B; 15 P×P, B×P; 16 B×P, Kt–Kt5; Black has a stronger attack in exchange for the pawn, while if 14 P–Q6, P×P (or even 14 ..., Kt–B3; 15 B×Kt, R×B; 16 P×P, R–R3; 17 P–R3, Kt–Q5; 18 Q–Q1, B–B3); 15 B×QP, B–B3; 16 P–B3, P–K5 Black approximately equalizes the game.

14 ... P×P

Opening the diagonal for the Bishop.

15 Kt×P P–B5!

Excellently played! A threat of

16 ..., B–R6 and then Kt–Kt5. So White sets up counter-chances on the Q file.

The QBP is indirectly defended, as if 16 Kt×QBP; 16 ..., B–B4!

16 QR–Q1 Kt×Kt

After this White again succeeds in seizing the initiative. 16 ..., B–R6 is stronger, with, e.g. the continuation 17 Kt×Kt ch, R×Kt; 18 B–B3, Q–B2 (otherwise 19 B–K7); 19 R(B)–K1.

17 B×Kt B–K3
18 Q–Q3

It appears that Black underestimated this move. Now he is forced to renounce the transfer Kt–K3–Kt4 which has been his objective.

18 Q–K4 is weaker for White, as it leads to 18 ..., P–B3 and a forced exchange on K6.

18 ... B×B

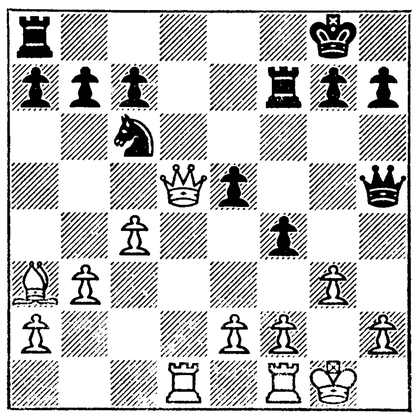
19 B–B3 could have been unpleasant.

19 Q×B

Of course, not 19 P×B, because of ..., R–B3!, with its continuation ..., Kt–B2–Kt4 or 20 ..., R–R3. White prefers to continue play along the Q file, which is greatly strengthened by his Bishop, controlling KB8.

19 ... Kt–B3

Position after Black's 19th move



20 B–B5!

The most difficult moment of the game. The Bishop move seems very simple, yet it was not easy to find.

If immediately 20 P–QKt4, 20 ..., R–Q1 is playable, as the pawn has blocked the Bishop's diagonal. 20 Q–K6 is refuted by 20 ..., Kt–Q5. But now White threatens both 21 Q–K6 and 21 P–QKt4. And in the event of 20 ..., Q×KP; 21 Q–K6, Q–R4; 22 R–Q7, Q–B4; 23 Q×Q, R×Q; 24 R×BP, R–B2; 25 R×R, K×R; 26 P×P, P×P; 27 R–Q1 White gets the better endgame.

20 ... R–K1
21 P–QKt4 P–QR3

Allowing an interesting finish. Correct is 21 ..., P–R3; 22 P–Kt5, Kt–Q1 (22 ..., R–Q1; 23 P×Kt!) and a long struggle still ahead.

22 P–Kt5 P×P
23 P×P Kt–R4
24 Q–K6

Immediately decides the game.

24 ... R–R1
25 R–Q7 Q–Kt3
26 Q–Q5 P–R3
27 R×P R–K1
28 B–Kt4

Transposing to an easily won endgame.

28 ... P–Kt3
29 B×Kt P×B
30 P–Kt6 Q–K3
31 Q×Q R×Q
32 KR–Kt1 R–K1
33 R×R K×R
34 P–Kt7 R–QKt1
35 P×P P×P
36 K–Kt2 K–K3
37 K–B3 P–Kt4
38 K–K4 Resigns

No. 23. *Queen's Gambit Declined*

V. Rauzer (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	P–Q4
4 B–Kt5	QKt–Q2
5 Kt–B3	P–B3
6 Q–Kt3	

This system, beginning with 6 Q–Kt3, was invented and thoroughly analysed by the Master V. Rauzer. The idea of the text move (not of the entire system, of course) is not original: White avoids the Cambridge Springs Variation, as 6 ..., Q–R4 is followed by 7 B–Q2! In the 1920s several games with Rochlin's move 6 R–B1, Q–R4; 7 B–Q2 were published in Soviet periodicals, the idea being analogous to that of Rauzer's move. As is known, finally the analysts managed to refute the Rochlin variation, chiefly because White's BP cannot be defended. 6 Q–Kt3 is free from this very essential defect. So Black is compelled to renounce the Cambridge Springs variation and resort to orthodox defence.

6 ... B–K2
7 P–K3 O–O
8 B–K2

After move six White's plan for further play was still not clear, but now his intention is gradually being disclosed: White refrains from the usual B–Q3 as he proposes to develop pressure on the Q file. At first glance this seems impossible, as the Q file is closed with pawns; but with more thoughtful consideration of the position it is impossible not to admit that his plan is justified. E.g. if we assume that White's Knight at B3 reaches K5, exchanges on this square will be disadvantageous to Black, as they will partially open the Q file. Meanwhile Black still has difficulty in developing his Queen's Bishop. It is interesting to note that in those games of the U.S.S.R. 1931 Championship in which Rauzer played 6 Q–Kt3, he always had the better game. Black's following attempt to develop the Queen's Bishop may be recommended as the best.

8 ... P–QKt3
9 P×P

Later it will become apparent that the immediate exchange at Q5 was not provoked by necessity. In general to relieve the pawn tension in the centre (in reply to Black's P–QKt3) is good only if the Q side can be weakened with B–R6, or if Black threatens to free his game by capturing at his QB5. After the text move Black has a half-open K file.

9 ... KP×P
10 O–O

Obviously, White cannot exchange off the white-square Bishops, as after 10 Q–R4, B–Kt2; 11 B–R6, P–Kt4 he loses a piece.

10 ... B–Kt2
11 KR–Q1

Stereotyped! As already pointed out, White's plan included developing the Knight to K5. In that case, with the continuation P–KB4, the Rook would be very useful on the KB file. So the correct move here is 11 QR–Q1.

11 ... QR–B1

A very serious error! Analysing this position at home, I proposed to continue 11 ..., P–KR3 (necessary, as the immediate 11 ..., Kt–K5 is met by 12 B–B4); 12 B–R4, Kt–K5; 13 B×B, Q×B; 14 Kt×Kt, P×Kt; 15 Kt–Q2, P–QB4 with an equal game. But at the board I departed from this intention, not wishing to

simplify the position, and at once miscalculated. 11 ..., R–K1! is very strong, preventing 12 Kt–K5, because of 12 ..., Kt×Kt; 13 P×Kt, Kt–Q2; 14 B–B4, B–B1! winning the KP. But now White continues 12 Kt–K5 with advantage.

12 Kt–K5 Kt×Kt

Black is forced to exchange Knights immediately, as after 13 P–KB4 White would recapture at K5 with the BP.

13 P×Kt Kt–Q2
14 B(Kt)–B4!

Excellent! White has no need whatever to exchange Bishops: he is already threatening 15 P–K4, against which Black must take urgent measures. E.g. unsatisfactory is 14 ..., P–KB3; 15 P×P, Kt×P; 16 B–Kt3! and the threat of P–K4 is irresistible.

From the combinative aspect Black's next move is hardly quite correct, and it was made partly because of general positional considerations. Black assumed that after the exchange of Bishops the pawn trio K5, B4, K3 would prove inadequately defended.

14 ... B–Kt4

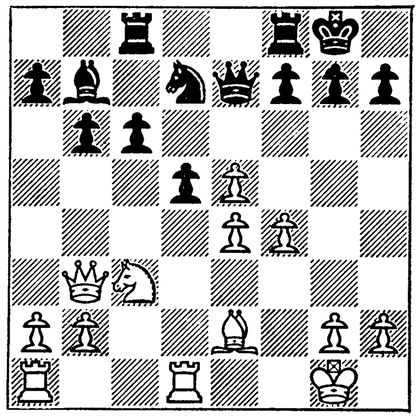
Provoking White into active operations in the centre and having in mind an interesting Queen manœuvre (see note after Black's 18th move) which at first glance refutes White's attack.

15 B×B

Unquestionably sound. The Knight's "brilliant" leap 15 Kt–K4, after 15 ..., B×B; 16 P×B, P×Kt; 17 P–K6, R–B2; 18 B–Kt4, K–R1 would lead to Black's advantage.

15 ... Q×B
16 P–B4 Q–K2
17 P–K4!

Position after White's 17th move



17 ... Q–B4 ch

Inadequately thought out! White's 17th move was no surprise to Black. Seeing it several moves ahead, when he called check Black was confident that this led to a win. What he counted on can be seen from the note to the next move. The right continuation, sufficient to equalize play, is 17 ..., Kt–B4!; 18 Q–R3, KR–Q1; 19 P×P, P×P; 20 Q×P, P–Q5; 21 Kt–Kt5, R–R1!; 22 Q×P, R–R3!; 23 Q–B7, R–Q2; 24 Q–Kt8 ch, R–Q1; and a draw by repetition of moves.

18 K–R1 R(QB)–Q1

Only here did I notice that the Queen manœuvre thought of at the 14th move: 18 ..., Q–K6 (threatening 19 ..., P–Q5 and 19 ... Q×BP) would not work because of the unpleasant, though fairly obvious surprise: 19 Kt×QP! and White wins easily. I had to seek a continuation which would allow me still "to fish in troubled waters." After 18 ..., P–Q5; 19 Kt–R4, Q–K2; 20 R×P, P–QB4; 21 R–B4 (or 21 R–Q6) Black would hardly have any hope of salvation.

19 P×P Q–K6

Completely bad is 19 ..., P×P; 20 B–B3! (20 Kt×P, Kt×P!) and White wins a pawn with an easy position.

20 Q–B4

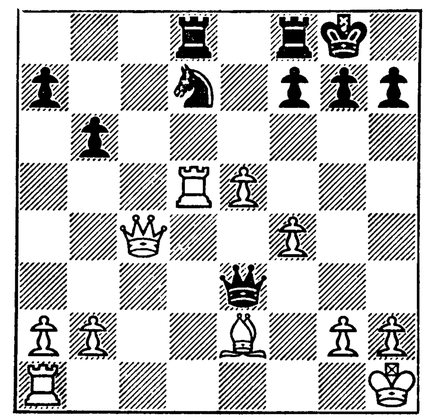
Presumably reckoning that after winning the pawn the rest was only a "question of technique," White at that moment revealed his ignorance of the technique of exploiting his superiority. There was an easy win in 20 B–B3! (not clinging to the KBP), Q×BP; 21 P×P, Kt–B4; 22 Q–R3, B–B1; 23 Q×P, etc. After the text move Black can count on the draw as almost secured.

20 ... P×P
21 Kt×P

A second mistake. White does not realize the danger of his position. He should have played 21 Q–Q4, Q×Q; 22 R×Q, Kt–B4 and White would even have rather the better endgame.

21 ... B×Kt!
22 R×B

Position after White's 22nd move



22 ... Kt–B4!!

The Knight is achieving brilliant successes! After 23 ..., Kt–K5 White faces the very unpleasant threat of a smothered mate. If 23 QR–Q1 Black all the same plays 23 ..., K–K5! winning the exchange. At the moment Black is threatening to win a piece: 23 ..., R×R; 24 Q×R, Q×B. As 23 R×R, R×R is obviously unsatisfactory, White's next move is forced.

23 B–B3 Kt–Q6

White has saved his piece, but has not defended himself against the Knight invasion.

24 P–KR3

Again the only move.

24 ... R×R
25 B×R

If White takes the Rook with his Queen then, by way of 25 ..., Kt–B7 ch; 26 K–R2, Q×P ch; 27 P–Kt3, Q–K6 and 28 ... Kt–Q6 Black secures for himself a sure but technically difficult win.

25 ... Q–Kt6
26 R–KB1

It is this natural move alone that proves to be the decisive mistake. A few years after this game was played, one amateur found salvation for White in 26 B×P ch!! (This combinative blow needed to be made at once. Rauzer decided on it too late.) R×B; 27 P–K6!, Kt–B7 ch; 28 K–Kt1, Kt×P ch; 29 K–R1, and a draw by perpetual check, as after 29 ..., R×P; 30 P–K7 ch Black is mated.

26 ... Kt–B7 ch
27 K–Kt1

Needless to say, immediate 27 R×Kt is no salvation.

27 ... Kt×P ch
28 K–R1 Kt–B7 ch
29 R×Kt

If 29 K–Kt1, Black would win by a simple method: 29 ..., Kt–Kt5!; 30 R–B3 (30 R–B1, Q–R7 ch; 31 K–B1, Kt–K6 ch), Q–K8 ch; 31 Q–B1 (31 R–B1, Q–K6 ch; 32 K–R1, Q–Kt6), Q×Q ch; 32 R×Q (32 K×Q, Kt–R7 ch), Kt–K6! and White loses the exchange.

29 ... Q×R
30 B×P ch

Too late!

30 ... R×B
31 P–K6 R×P!

To reply to 32 P–K7 dis. ch with 32 ..., R×Q; 33 P–K8(Q) ch, Q–B1; 34 Q–K6 ch, Q–B2; and the Rook at B5 defends B1.

White resigns.

No. 24. *Slav Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*N. Riumin* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 P–QB4	P–QB3
3 Kt–KB3	Kt–KB3
4 P–K3	P–K3
5 B–Q3	

As I have already said in my notes to Game 8, against Sozin, at this period I avoided the Meran Variation and so did not play 5 Kt–B3.

5 ... QKt–Q2
6 O–O

Here 6 QKt–Q2 is more consistent, in order to recapture with the Knight after 6 ..., QP×P, and White prevents P–K4 for a long time. But White was not attracted by the Semmering variation, 6 Kt–Q2, P–B4! which almost entirely equalizes the game for Black. As will be seen later, the text move also yields White no advantage, if Black chooses a sound plan.

6 ... B–Q3

An oldfashioned manner of playing this defence. In our day theory recommends B–K2.

The idea of achieving freedom by advancing the KP is sound, but tactically it should have been carried through differently. It was necessary to play 6 ..., P×P!; 7 B×P, B–Q3, and White is unable to prevent Black's liberating move P–K4—as in the 23rd game of the first match between Alekhine and Bogoljubov.

7 QKt–Q2

A highly important move! White parries Black's threat, indicated in the preceding note (P×P and P–K4). Now we have the Semmering Variation, with the difference that Black has played B–Q3 instead of the sound move P–B4.

Black should now have summed up the situation and given up the struggle for the centre, playing 7 ..., O–O; 8 P–K4, P×KP; 9 Kt×KP, Kt×Kt; 10 B×Kt, emerging with a cramped but strong position.

7 ... P–K4

One cannot assume that Black was unaware of the theoretical arguments against this highly dubious sally; it is obvious that the play opens up to White's advantage. One can assume with confidence that, playing to win in this game, Black deliberately went for complications. But in doing so he committed a double error. First, when facing an opponent who has a fairly good knowledge of opening variations, one must not choose unsatisfactory continuations. Secondly, the game must be complicated in such a manner that it is not associated with any risk of getting a lost position. In this regard many of Alekhine's games are highly instructive, for he had a masterly way of finding the road to complications at the right moment.

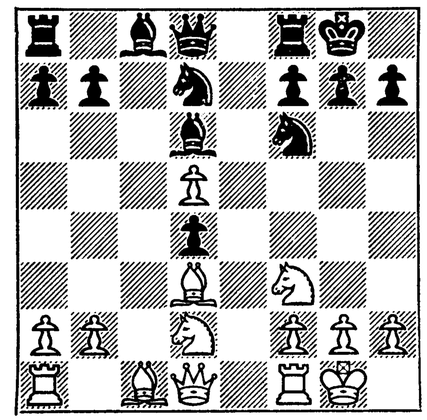
8 P–K4! O–O

Necessary. Neither 8 ..., KP×P; 9 P–K5, nor 8 ..., P×BP; 9 Kt×BP, nor, finally, 8 ..., QP×KP; 9 Kt(Q2)×KP, Kt×Kt; 10 B×Kt, O–O; 11 QP×P, Kt×P; 12 Kt×Kt, B×Kt; 13 B×RP ch ensured equality.

9 BP×P BP×P
10 KP×P P×P

10 ..., Kt×P; 11 Kt–B4! leads to the loss of a pawn.

Position after Black's 10th move



A very interesting position has arisen, completely symmetrical, with the Q file queerly cluttered up with pieces. In such cases the advantage most often remains with the one whose turn it is to move. The present position excellently illustrates this rule. White's idea is very simple: to defend the pawn on Q5, and to win the pawn on Q4.

11 Kt–K4 Kt×Kt

Black agrees to give up his Q5 pawn without a struggle; however, it is difficult to advise anything better. After 11 ..., Kt–B4 (or Kt–Kt3); 12 Kt×Kt ch, Q×Kt; 13 B–KKt5, or 11 ... Kt–K4 (continuing the symmetry); 12 B–KKt5, B–KKt5; 13 B–K2! Black's position is unsatisfactory. 11 ..., B–K2; 12 P–Q6 also looks doubtful.

12 B×Kt Kt–B4

Again a perfectly sound idea (in exchange for a pawn Black tries to get the advantage of the pair of Bishops), but tactically it is so inexact that the two-Bishop superiority turns out to be not Black's, but White's!

Stronger is 12 ..., Kt–B3! forcing the continuation: 13 Q×P (13 B–Kt5, B–K2!; 14 B×Kt, B×B; 15 Kt×P, Q–Kt3!), Kt×B (13 ..., R–K1; 14 B–Kt5!, B–K2; 15 R–K1!); 14 Q×Kt, which will be referred to in the next note.

13 B–B2

13 Q×P immediately is also possible, but after 13 ..., Kt×B; 14 Q×Kt, R–K1; 15 Q–Q4, B–KB4; or 15 Q–Q3, Q–B3! Black would have excellent compensation for his pawn in the shape of two Bishops. So White accepts the doubling of his pawns on the K side, simply so that he may himself be left with two Bishops. True, even now, by continuing 13 ..., P–Q6; 14 B×P, Kt×B; 15 Q×Kt, Black would get two Bishops. But in doing so he would of course lose a tempo by comparison with the analogous continuation he could have forced earlier.

13 ... B–Kt5
14 Q×P B×Kt
15 P×B KR–K1!

Subtly played! After the more superficial 15 ..., Q–Q2, with 16 Q–KR4 White, having secured his King, would himself have the attack against the Black King. Similarly 15 ..., P–B4; 16 K–R1 promised Black unpleasantness.

The text move has the wily threat of 16 ..., B–K4, as after 17 Q×Kt Black has his choice between a draw, by 17 ..., Q–R5; 18 P–B4, Q–Kt5 ch, or winning back a piece by 17 ..., QR–B1. White finds the right continuation, consolidating his material superiority.

16 R–Q1! R–K7

It is obvious that after 16 ..., B–K4 then 17 Q–KKt4.

17 B–B5 P–KKt3
18 B–R3 Kt–Q2!

Black is manœuvring with great artistry. He threatens 19 ..., B–B4 and 19 ..., B–K4 with attack on one of the pawns. However, if the position is studied carefully it is easy to see that Black's initiative is of a temporary nature. White has only to return his opponent his pawn for Black's attack to dissipate, and with his two Bishops and the passed pawn at Q5 White will be able to decide the game swiftly in his own favour. But it is not even necessary to return the pawn; 19 Q–Q3, R–K1; 20 P–B4! is quite sufficient for a win.

The first method, which White chooses, should yield fruit more quickly.

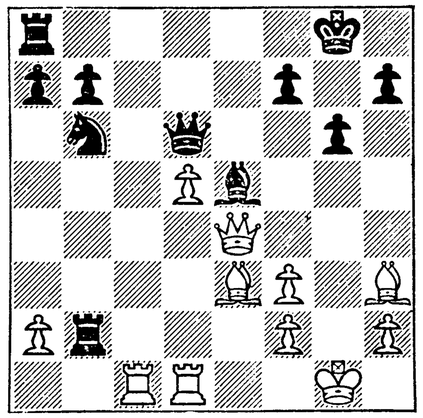
19 B–K3! B–K4
20 Q–QB4 R×KtP
21 QR–B1

This move may not let the win slip, but it greatly complicates it. The logical continuation was 21 P–Q6! (exploiting the circumstance that in order to win the KtP Black has had to raise his blockade of the QP) and Black has no satisfactory defence. E.g. 21 P–Q6, Kt–Kt3; 22 Q–K4, B×P(Q); 23 Q–Q4! or 21 P–Q6, R–B1; 22 Q–K4, B–B3 (22 ..., B–Kt2; 23 Q–K7); 23 Q–Kt4! Black could not struggle for long against the Q6 pawn.

21 ... Kt–Kt3
22 Q–K4 Q–Q3

White's mistake is replied to with one by Black. It has long been known that the Queen is a bad intermediary, as any piece can drive her off. The correct move is 22 ..., B–Q3, after which White would have the slightly better position, but no forced win. Now the game is decided in a few moves.

Position after Black's 22nd move



23 P–B4 B–Kt2

After 23 ..., B–B3; 24 B–QB5, Q–Q1; 25 P–Q6 also, Black would soon be forced to lay down his arms.

24 B–QB5

White's pieces dominate the whole board. The rest is simple.

24 ... Q–Q1
25 B–K7 Q–K1
26 P–Q6 Q–Kt4
27 P–Q7 Kt×P
28 B×Kt Q–Kt3
29 Q–K3 Q×Q
30 P×Q R×QRP
31 B–QB8 P–KR4
32 R–Q8 ch K–R2

Here the time check ended, and Black resigned without waiting for White's reply.

No. 25. *English Opening*

G. Kirillov (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–QB4	P–QB4
2 Kt–QB3	Kt–KB3
3 P–KKt3	

Experience has shown that this system gives White no advantage whatever, if Black succeeds in exchanging off pawns in the centre and then posting his Knight at QB2, where it occupies a useful position.

3 ... P–Q4

4 P×P Kt×P
5 B–Kt2

After this Black prevents P–Q4, and White proves unable to set up a pawn centre. But even his piece development is not altogether satisfactory. His King's Bishop can do nothing alone, and if the Queen's Bishop is developed at QKt2 it will come up against the pawn outpost at K4. Here the best move is 5 P–Q4! which leads to a quite satisfactory game for White.

5 ... Kt–B2

Often played by A. Rubinstein and, apparently, stronger than 5..., Kt–Kt3, as at B2 the Knight does not block the KtP, which may be needed to defend B4.

6 Kt–B3 Kt–B3
7 O–O P–K4

With colours reversed we now have the "dragon" variation of the Sicilian Defence, and that in a form advantageous to Black, as the QBP is already posted at B4. For the next few moves the opponents' respective plans are fairly clear. White is organizing an attack on the QBP, while Black is aiming at rapid development and consolidation of the central outposts, B4 and K4.

8 P–Kt3 B–K2
9 B–Kt2 O–O
10 R–B1

White is now threatening Kt–QR4, with simultaneous attack on the pawns at B4 and K4. He has outstripped Black in development and holds the initiative. The only question is whether he will be able with an attack on B4 to achieve real advantages; if this attack is repulsed his initiative will be ended, and Black's superiority in the centre will tell at once.

10 ... P–KB3
11 Kt–K1

Necessary! If at once 11 Kt–QR4; 11 ..., P–QKt3! and the continuation 12 Kt×KP, Kt×Kt; 13 B×R, Kt×B is clearly bad for White. Black could now play 11 ..., B–Q2, in order if 12 Kt–R4 to continue none the less 12 ..., P–QKt3. But, assuming that the pawn at B4 can be defended by other more energetic moves, Black first prevents Kt–Q3.

11 ... B–B4
12 Kt–R4 Kt–R3
13 B–QR3 Q–R4
14 Kt–B2

White cannot further increase the pressure on the B4 pawn. Meanwhile Black has only to bring his Rooks into action to complete his development. The exchange 14 B×Kt would give Black doubled pawns, but with his two strong Bishops he would be able to develop operations on the weakened K side.

14 ... KR–Q1
15 Kt–K3 B–K3

Not 15 ..., R×P; 16 Q–K1, B–K3; 17 B×Kt (depriving the Black Queen of defence), P×B; 18 R–Q1, QR–Q1; 19 B–B1, and White wins.

16 P–Q3

An admission of the bankruptcy of his plan associated with attack on the BP. Meanwhile Black, now developing his last piece, disposes of the threat B×Kt and passes to a decisive attack.

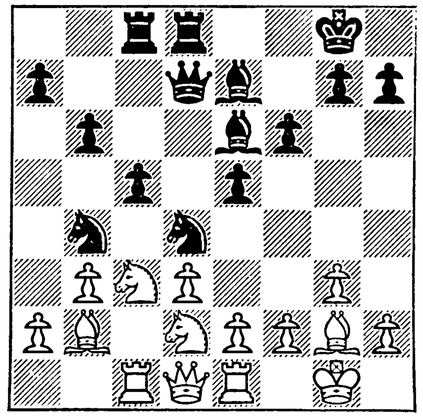
Black's greatest difficulties would arise from 16 B×Kt, P×B; 17 P–Q3, though in this case, by continuing 17 ..., QR–B1; 18 Q–B2, Kt–Kt5 he retains superiority.

16 ... QR–B1
17 Kt–B4 Q–B2
18 Kt–Q2 P–QKt3
19 B–Kt2

White is at a loss and is playing without plan.

19 ... Q–Q2
20 R–K1 Kt–Q5
21 Kt–QB3 Kt–Kt5!

Position after Black's 21 ... Kt–Kt5



Black has achieved an ideal disposition of his pieces and pawns. His Knights are posted invulnerably, as the moves P–QR3 and P–K3 would fatally weaken White's position.

Now White fails to see a fairly obvious combination, by which Black wins a pawn. But in any case it is hardly possible now to indicate any way to his salvation.

22 Kt–B3 Kt×RP!
23 Kt(KB3)×Kt

23 Kt(QB3)×Kt, B×P; 24 Q–Q2, Kt×Kt ch; 25 B×Kt, B×Kt; 26 B×KP, B–Q4 is also hopeless for White.

23 ... Kt×Kt
24 R×Kt BP×Kt
25 R×R R×R
26 P–K3 B–QKt5
27 R–K2 B–B6
28 P×P B×B
29 R×B Q×P
30 R–R2

No better is 30 R–B2, R×R; 31 Q×R, Q–R8 ch; 32 B–B1, B–R6; 33 Q–B4 ch, K–R1; 34 P–Q4, P×P; and 35 ..., Q×B ch with easy win.

30 ... P–QR4
31 R–R4 Q–B6
32 R–R4 Q–B8
Resigns

NINETEEN THIRTY-TWO

So far as chess was concerned, 1932 was a comparatively uneventful year for me; I played only eleven games, in the Leningrad Championship. A year had passed since the U.S.S.R. Seventh Championship, but the lack of training did not affect my results: I had two draws, and won all the rest. Five of the games are given in this book (Nos. 26–30). In all probability my lack of training was offset by the amount of work I did in preparing my book on the games of the Seventh Championship (this was my first important work on chess), so that I was adequately trained in analysis.

I spent my summer holiday in the Mordovian Region, on the banks of the river Moksha, in the ancient town of Temnikov, which was nearly forty miles from the railway. There I successfully analysed all the U.S.S.R. championship games, and returned to Leningrad fully equipped.

In the spring of 1931 I passed out of the Institute, as a fully qualified electrical engineer, but stayed on as a post-graduate student.

LENINGRAD CHAMPIONSHIP

September

No. 26. *Nimzo-Indian Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*G. Myasoyedov* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–K3
2 P–QB4	Kt–KB3
3 Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4 Q–Kt3	P–B4
5 P×P	Kt–B3
6 B–Kt5	

I played this move in a game with Mazel, in the U.S.S.R. 1931 Championship. White aims at preventing 6 ..., Kt–K5, which gives Black an equal game. In the game with Mazel 6 B–Kt5 was replied to by 6 ..., B×P and White retained superiority. Myasoyedov chooses a different way of development, which also does not enable Black to equalize the game.

6 ... Q–R4

The defect of this move is that after 7 B×Kt Black is left with a shattered pawn position. Ragozin found the right reply to 6 B–Kt5 in a game against me (Tournament of the Leningrad House of Scientists, 1932–33) which went: 6 ..., P–KR3; 7 B–R4, P–Kt4; 8 B–Kt3, Kt–K5; 9 P–K3, B×Kt ch; 10 P×B, Q–B3; 11 Kt–K2, P–K4! and Black has excellent play.

7 B×Kt P×B
8 Kt–B3 Q×BP

8 ..., B×P was worth considering.

9 P–QR3 B–R4

Black withdraws his Bishop to a less effective diagonal. Preferable is 9 ..., Q–R4; 10 R–B1, B–K2; followed by P–Q3 and B–Q2.

10 P–K3 P–QR3
11 B–K2 KR–Kt1

Black lets slip the opportunity 11 ..., P–Q4!; 12 R–QB1 (12 P×P, B×Kt ch; 13 P×B, Q×QP), P×P which would have freed his game a little. This shows that White too had played inexactly on the preceding move: instead of 11 B–K2 he should have played 11 O–O–O! with a sharp struggle.

12 O–O B–B2

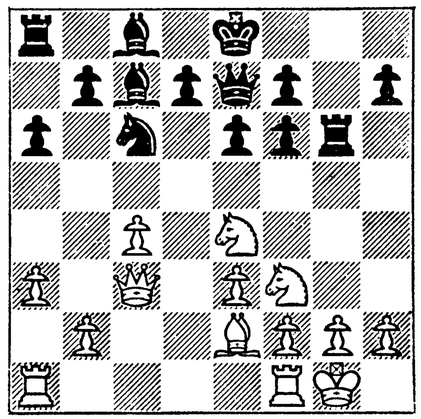
Probably 12 ..., P–B4 is stronger, preventing 13 Kt–K4.

13 Kt–K4 Q–K2

None the less the better move is 13 ..., Q–B4; 14 Q–Q3! (to reply to 14 ..., P–Q4 with 15 P×P, P×P; 16 Q×P), K–K2, etc. But now the tempo of events is quickened.

14 Q–B3 R–Kt3

Position after Black's 14th move



14 ..., Kt–K4; 15 P–B5! is no better, since Black cannot defend himself against R–Q1 and Kt–Q6 ch.

15 P–B5!

A murderous move! Threatening QR–Q1 and Kt–Q6 ch. Not 15 ..., P–B4; 16 Q–R8 ch, Q–B1; 17 Kt–B6 ch, winning a pawn. If 15 ..., P–Kt3; 16 P×P, B×P; 17 KR–Q1, B–B2; then 18 QR–B1, and Black has no move. His following attempt to free himself is also not very satisfactory.

15 ... P–Q4
16 P×P e.p. B×P
17 KR–Q1 B–B2
18 Kt–B5 K–B1

As defence against 19 Kt×RP, which now would be met by 19 ..., R×Kt; 20 B×R, P×B; 21 Q×Kt, B–Kt2 and Black wins.

19 QR–B1

Again threatening 20 Kt×RP.

19 ... B–K4
20 Kt×B Kt×Kt

20 ..., P×Kt; 21 B–B3 is hopeless.

21 P–B4

21 Q–R5, Kt–B3; 22 Q–Kt6 was also worth considering; Black would have great difficulty in meeting the threat of 23 B×RP.

21 ... Kt–B3
22 B–B3 P–K4
23 P–QKt4 Kt–Q1

Leads to immediate defeat. Black could have resisted a little longer with 23 ..., P–B4, though even so White would win by 24 B×Kt, R×B; 25 P×P, P–Kt3; 26 P–K6!, K–Kt1 (26 ..., P–B3; 27 R–Q7, B×R; 28 Kt×B ch, Q×Kt; 29 P×Q); 27 P×P ch, K×P; 28 Q–Kt3 ch, B–K3 (28 ..., K–B1; 29 Q–Q5); 29 Kt×B, Q×Kt (29 ..., R×Kt; 30 Q–Q5); 30 R–Q7 ch, K–Kt1; 31 Q×Q ch, R×Q; 32 R(B)–B7.

24 Q–Q3 K–K1

Or 24 ..., B–Kt5; 25 B×B, R×B; 26 Q–B5, and 27 R–Q7.

25 P–B5 R–Kt4

If 25 ..., R–Kt1; 26 Kt×RP, and Black can resign.

26 Kt–K4 R–Kt1
27 Kt–Q6 ch Resigns

No. 27. *French Defence*

I. Rabinovich (White) — *M. Botvinnik* (Black)

1 P–K4 P–K3
2 P–Q4 P–Q4
3 Kt–QB3 B–Kt5
4 P×P

With this continuation Black experiences no difficulty whatever in development; so it is rarely played in tournaments.

4 ... P×P
5 B–Q3 Kt–QB3
6 KKt–K2 KKt–K2
7 O–O B–Kt5
8 P–B3 B–K3
9 B–K3

A very dubious manœuvre. Better to play at once 9 Kt–R4.

9 ... Kt–B4
10 B–B2 Q–Q2

More consistent would be 10 ..., B×Kt!; 11 P×B (11 Kt×B, KKt×P), Q–Q2; or even 11 ..., P–KKt4 followed by Castling long.

11 Kt–R4 P–QKt3

Otherwise White could play 12 Kt–B5, B×Kt; 13 P×B, gaining the pair of Bishops.

12 P–QR3 B–K2
13 Kt(R)–B3 B–B3
14 B–R6

Also worth considering is 14 B×Kt, B×B; 15 Kt–B4, Kt–K2; 16 Kt–R5. The further phase of the middle-game consists of a series of complicated manœuvres, by which White gains a slight superiority.

14 ... O–O
15 Kt–R2 Q–Q3
16 Q–Q2 P–R3
17 QR–Q1 QR–Q1
18 P–KKt4

Gaining advantage in space on the K side. This move is safe for White, as the closed position does not allow Black to exploit the weakening of the pawn chain.

18 ... Kt–R5
19 B–Kt3 Q–K2

19 ..., Q–Q2 is weaker owing to 20 B–Kt5 with a dangerous pin.

20 B–Kt5 Kt–R4

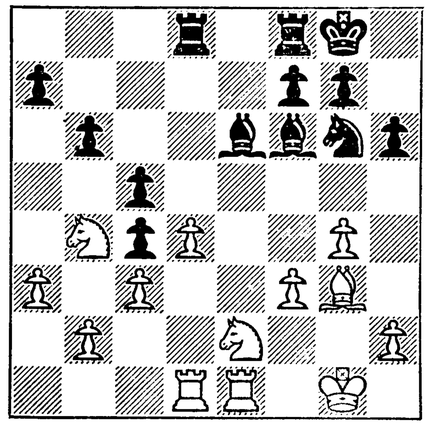
After this White decides to exchange Queens and pass to the endgame. Black could not oppose this; in the variation 20 ..., Kt–Kt1; 21 P–B3, P–B4; 22 B–Q3, Kt–B3; 23 B–Kt1, White's position would be preferable.

21 Q–Kt4 P–QB3
22 Q×Q B×Q
23 B–Q3 B–B3
24 P–B3 Kt–Kt3
25 KR–K1 Kt(R)–B5

Hoping to complicate the game.

26 B×Kt(B5) P×B
27 Kt–Kt4 P–B4

Position after Black's 27th move



A cunning trap, the idea of which White discovers only some moves later.

28 Kt–B6

Natural, and ... bad! The right move is 28 Kt–B2, and after 28 ..., B–K2; 29 Kt–K3, P×P; 30 Kt×P White has a slight advantage.

28 ... R–Q2
29 P×P

Obviously 29 Kt–K5, B×Kt; 30 P×B, R–Q6 could not allure White.

29 ... P×P
30 R×R B×R
31 Kt–R5

The pawn cannot be taken because the piece would be lost.

31 ... B–K3

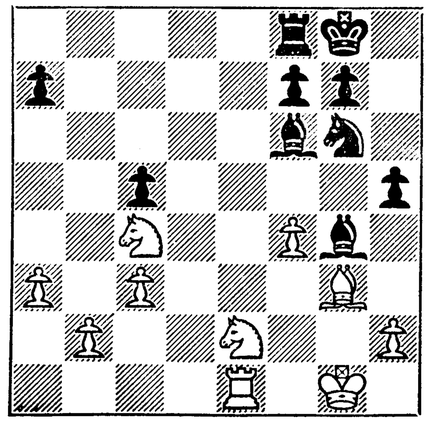
Gradually White's mistake at his 28th move is being revealed.

At R5 the Knight is out of the game, the QKtP is weak, and White's K side hardly inspires confidence. On the other hand the apparently bad Black QB pawns prove invincible, both 32 Kt–Kt7, B–Q4; 33 Kt×P, Kt–R5; and 32 B–Q6, R–Q1!; 33 B×P, R–Q7; 34 B×P, Kt–K4!; 35 Kt–Q4, B–Q4 are equally bad for White. With the better continuation 32 R–Q1 Black could choose between a pawn sacrifice by 32 ..., Kt–K4; 33 B×Kt, B×B; 34 Kt–B6, B–B2; 35 Kt×P, P–B4 with excellent chances, and the obvious 32 ..., B–K4; 33 P–B4, B–B2; 34 P–B5, B×Kt; 35 P×B, P×P with a sharp game and an extra pawn.

White's next move is clearly bad; the Black Bishops gradually dominate all the board, while White's K side becomes irrevocably weak.

32 P–B4 B×KtP
33 Kt×P P–KR4!

Position after Black's 33rd move



An unpleasant sally! A threat to win the KBP by 34 ..., P–R5. To 34 Kt–K3 Black continues not 34 ..., B×Kt; 35 R×B, P–R5; 36 P–B5, P×B; 37 P×Kt, P×P ch; 38 R×P, P×P and the win is problematical, but simply 34 ..., B–B6, keeping up strong pressure.

Weaker is 33 ..., R–K1; 34 Kt–K5!, B×Kt; 35 P×B, Kt×P; 36 Kt–Q4!, P–B3; 37 B×Kt, P×B; 38 Kt–B6.

34 Kt–B1 R–Q1

34 ..., P–R5 is met by 35 B–B2 attacking the BP. But Black has no need to hurry.

35 Kt–K3 B–R6
36 R–Q1

Loses a pawn and the game. But in any case there was no salvation. E.g. 36 P–B5, Kt–R5! is also of no use, and Black wins.

36 ... P–R5
37 R×R ch B×R
38 B–B2 Kt×P
39 Kt–B4 B–K2
40 P–Kt4 B–K3
41 Kt–R5 Kt–R6 ch
42 K–Kt2 Kt×B
43 K×Kt P×P

A graphic example of the Bishops' superiority to Knights.

44 RP×P B–Q3
45 K–Kt2 P–R6 ch
46 K–Kt1 P–Kt4
47 Kt–B6 B–Q4
48 Kt–Q4

Not, of course, 48 Kt×P, B–KB5; 49 Kt–B8, B–K6 ch; 50 K–B1, B–Kt7 ch and 51 ..., B×Kt.

48 ... B–KB5
49 Kt(B)–K2 B–K6 ch
50 K–B1 B–K5
51 K–K1 P–B4

The time has come when one Bishop can be exchanged against a Knight, which, incidentally, disposes of White's last chances.

52 Kt(K)–Kt3 B×Kt
53 P×B K–B2
54 Kt–K2 K–K3
55 Kt–B3 B–B3
56 K–B2 P–B5
57 Kt–K2 B–Kt7
58 Kt–B3 P–Kt5
59 K–Kt1 B–Kt2
60 P–Kt5 K–B4
61 Kt–R4 P–Kt6!

White resigns, as even 62 Kt–B5 will not prevent Black playing 62 ..., P–B6.

No. 28. *Queen's Gambit Accepted*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*V. Alatortsev* (Black)
1 Kt–KB3	P–Q4
2 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
3 P–B4	P–B3
4 P–K3	P–K3
5 B–Q3	P×P

In sum we now have a Queen's Gambit Accepted.

6 B×P P–B4
7 O–O Kt–B3
8 Q–K2

An important move. 8 Kt–B3 at once is not so strong, as after 8..., B–K2 White has no advantage from 9 Q–K2, P×P; 10 R–Q1, P–K4, etc.

Black avoids P–QR3 to no purpose; if White moves to prevent P–QKt4, he must play P–QR4, so weakening his Q side.

8 ... P×P
9 R–Q1 B–K2
10 P×P O–O
11 Kt–B3 Kt–QKt5

A necessary manœuvre, ensuring that Black controls Q4; otherwise, with P–Q5 White is delivered from his one weakness, the isolated pawn, and also opens up the game, which is to his benefit as his development is more advanced.

12 Kt–K5 QKt–Q4

Here the correct move is 12 ..., B–Q2, as after 13 P–Q5, P×P; 14 Kt×P, Kt(QKt)×Kt; 15 B×Kt, Kt×B; 16 R×Kt, B–KKt5; 17 Q–B4, Q×R!; 18 Q×Q, QR–Q1 Black equalizes the game. This variation was found by the master V. Chekhover.

13 B–KKt5

13 Q–B3 is worth considering, again attacking Q5. But it would appear that even so Black, with 13 ..., Q–Q3 (followed by B–Q2) gets a satisfactory game.

13 ... P–KR3

13 ..., Kt×Kt is followed simply by 14 P×Kt, Kt–Q4; 15 B–Q2 and the Q4 pawn is well supported.

14 B–R4 B–Q2!

Weaker is 14 ..., Kt×Kt; 15 P×Kt, Kt–Q4; 16 B×B, Kt×B (16 ..., Q×B; 17 Kt–Kt6); Black has prepared a shrewd continuation, the object of which will be gathered from our further comments. As White cannot allow B–B3, his reply is forced.

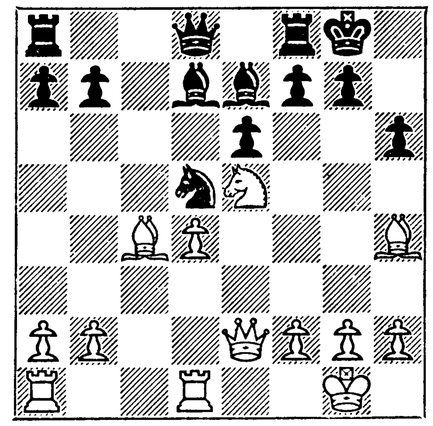
15 Kt×Kt Kt×Kt

Much weaker is 15 ..., P×Kt; 16 B×Kt, P×B; 17 Kt×B, Q×Kt; 18 B–Q3, and Black is in no condition to hold out for long.

16 B×B

There is nothing better. At first glance it seems that with 16 B×Kt White wins the QKt pawn, as 16 ..., P×B; 17 Kt×B is hopeless for Black. But in reality 16 B×Kt is followed by 16 ..., P×B; 17 Kt×B, R–K1!!; 18 B×B, Q×Kt; 19 R–K1, QR–B1! and Black wins back the piece with a probable draw: 20 Q–B3, R×B; 21 R×R, Q×R; 22 Q×QP, R–B7; 23 Q–QKt5, Q–K5.

Position after Black's 15th move



16 ... Q×B

16 ..., Kt×B immediately loses. 17 P–Q5, P×P; 18 B×P, Kt×B; 19 R×Kt, B–Kt5; 20 Q–B4! and White is a piece up.

17 Kt–Kt6 P×Kt
18 B×Kt

White has the better of it after all, as Black's pawns are weakened and must be defended by pieces; White's pieces are posted more actively.

18 ... QR–K1

Indirectly defending the QKtP. If 19 B×KtP Black, by playing 19 ..., B–R5; 20 P–QKt3, B×P restores equality in material.

19 R–K1 Q–Kt5
20 B–Kt3 R–B3

Obviously, not 20 ..., Q×QP; 21 QR–Q1. The defence Black has chosen is wrong. He quite uselessly doubles the Rooks on the KB file, where there is nothing for them to do. He should have withdrawn the Bishop to B1 and prepared to double Rooks on the Q file.

After Black has removed the Rooks from play White succeeds in forcing a Queen exchange and transposing to an advantageous endgame.

21 QR–Q1 R(K)–KB1
22 P–B3 K–R2
23 Q–Q2 Q–Kt3
24 R–K5 R–B5
25 Q–K3

At the moment 25 Q–R5 is no use because of 25 ..., R×QP!; nor 25 Q–B3 (to play 26 Q–B5) because of R–B1.

25 ... R(1)–B3

This makes it possible for White to transfer the Queen to B5, but it is doubtful whether Black has any better move.

26 Q–B3 B–B3

Now 27 B×P would be met with 27 ..., B×P.

27 Q–B5 Q×Q
28 P×Q

Now White has practically an extra pawn, as the four Black pawns on the K side can be held by White's three without difficulty. The result of the game is beyond doubt.

28 ... R(5)–B4

Or 28 ..., R(3)–B4; 29 R(Q)–K1, R×R; 30 R×R, R–Q5; 31 K–B2, R–Q7 ch; 32 R–K2, R×R ch; 33 K×R, and White should win.

29 R(Q)–K1 R×R

Also bad: 29 ..., B–Q4; 30 B×B, P×B; 31 R×R, R×R (31 ..., P×R; 32 R–Q1); 32 R–K7, P–Q5; 33 P–QKt4.

30 R×R R–B4

This simplification is tantamount to surrender, but in any case there is no salvation.

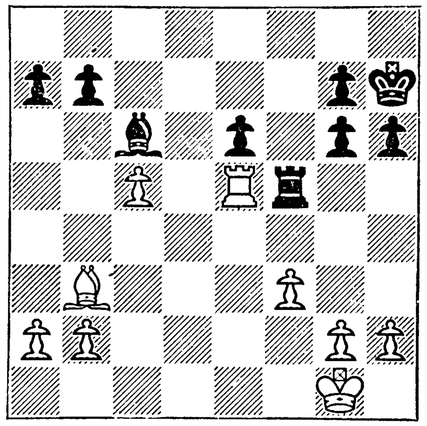
No. 29. *Queen's Indian Defence*

V. Chekhover (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–KB3	P–QKt3
4 P–KKt3	B–Kt2
5 B–Kt2	B–K2
6 O–O	O–O
7 Kt–B3	P–Q4

7 ..., Kt–K5 is regarded as a better continuation, leading to an equal game.

8 P×P

Position after Black's 30th move



31 R×R KP×R
32 K–B2 P–KKt4

If 32 ..., P–B5; 33 B–B2 and 34 B–K4.

33 K–K3 K–Kt3
34 K–Q4 K–B3
35 B–Q5

Forcibly transposing to a pawn endgame.

35 ... P–KR4
36 P–KR3 P–Kt5
37 RP×P BP×P
38 P×P P×P
39 P–KKt3 K–B4
40 P–Kt4 K–B3
41 K–K4 K–K2
42 B×B P×B
43 K–B5

White has various ways of winning.

43 ... P–R3
44 P–R3 K–B2
45 K×P K–K3
46 K–Kt5

Black resigns, as after 46 .... K–Q4; 47 K–Kt6, and White's pawn queens first.

The right reply is: 8 Kt–K5, giving White the advantage, as 8 ... QKt–Q2; 9 P×P, P×P; 10 Q–R4! is disastrous to Black.

8 ... P×P
9 B–KB4

Here too 9 Kt–K5 would be very strong. Now Black satisfactorily completes his development.

9 ... QKt–Q2
10 Kt–QKt5

Unnecessary. 10 QR–B1 at once is simpler, forcing 10 ..., P–B3.

10 ... Kt–K1

10 ..., P–QR3 is out of the question in view of 11 B×P!, Q–B1; 12 B–Q6.

11 QR–B1 P–QB3
12 Kt–B3 Kt–Q3
13 Q–B2

A passive move, allowing Black to obtain the advantage. White should have exploited his better development and opened up the game at once by 13 B×Kt!, B×B; 14 P–K4.

13 ... P–KB4

Now we have something on the lines of the Dutch Defence.

14 B–KR3 P–KKt3

Black defends the KBP, so as to manœuvre later with the Kt on Q3.

15 KR–Q1 Kt–B2!

Because of Black's threat P–KKt4–Kt5 the Bishop at R3 must retreat. True, even so, by advancing his pawn Black squeezes out the White pieces and gains an advantage in space.

16 B–Kt2 P–KKt4
17 B–Q2 Kt–Q3
18 Kt–K1!

White finds the right manœuvre.

18 ... B–B3
19 P–K3 Q–K2
20 Kt–Q3 Kt–K5
21 B–K1

A weak move, after which Black's game is easy. 21 P–B4! was called for, followed by the Knight's transfer to K5. In this case, too, Black retains the initiative, but by occupying K5 White would at least slow up the tempo of the enemy attack.

21 ... QR–B1
22 Q–Kt3

Black's next move is forced, because of the threat of 23 Kt×Kt, BP×Kt; 24 B–Kt4. This could not be played at once because of 22 Kt×Kt, BP×Kt; 23 B–Kt4, P×Kt! with an attack on the Queen.

22 ... KR–K1
23 B–R3 P–Kt5

The simplest. Black secures the Knight at K5.

24 B–Kt2 Kt–B1
25 Kt–B4 Kt–K3
26 Kt×Kt(K3)

Necessary, as after 26 Kt(QB)–K2, Kt(3)–KKt4! some serious unpleasantness arises for White.

26 ... Q×Kt
27 Kt–K2 B–Kt4
28 Q–R3 P–QR4
29 Q–Kt3

Leads to swift defeat, though even with 29 Kt–B4, B×Kt; 30 KP×B, B–R3; 31 P–B3, P×P White has a hard game.

29 ... B–QR3

The Knight is forced back to his previous post: in the continuation 30 Kt–B4, B×Kt; 31 KP×B, B–K7 White loses the exchange.

30 Kt–B3 R–Kt1

Black should have played at once 30 ..., B–QB5, and 31 Q×KtP is out of the question because of 31 ..., B–Q1; 32 Q–R7, R–K2.

31 Q–B2 R(Kt)–B1
32 Kt–K2

The Knight manœuvre does not save the game.

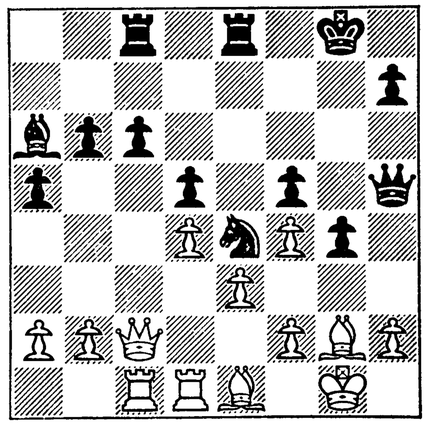
32 ... Q–B2

More exact is 32 ..., Q–R3! with the threat of B×P provoking 33 Kt–B4. But in any case there appears to be no satisfactory continuation for White.

33 Kt–B4 B×Kt
34 KtP×B Q–R4!

White resigns. There is no defence against R–K3–R3. The final position deserves a diagram.

Position after Black's 34th move



No. 30. *Réti Opening*

G. Lisitsin (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 Kt–KB3	P–QB4
2 P–QB4	Kt–KB3
3 P–KKt3	P–Q4
4 P×P	Kt×P
5 B–Kt2	Kt–QB3
6 O–O	

Here 6 P–Q4! is more appropriate, with a good game for White. Now Black prohibits this move for a long time, which enables him to get an excellent game.

6 ... P–K4

The upshot is the "dragon" variation of the Sicilian Defence, with colours reversed, but with the advantageous move P–QB4.

7 P–Q3 B–K2
8 QKt–Q2

Black's simplest reply to 8 Kt–QB3, avoiding simplification, is 8 ..., Kt–B2!

8 ... O–O
9 Kt–B4 P–KB3
10 B–K3 B–K3
11 P–QR4

Consolidates the position of the Knight, but weakens the Q side. The sound plan for White in such positions is the preparation of P–KB4 (as in the Kashdan–Nimzovitch game at Bled in 1931, and the Botvinnik–Fine game at Nottingham, 1936). True, in the present game White has already posted his pieces in such a manner that it is not easy to carry out this plan.

Four of White's next nine moves are made with the Queen. That would rather suggest that he is playing without a plan.

Taking this into account, Black does not hurry with the organization of his attack, but for the time being methodically consolidates his position.

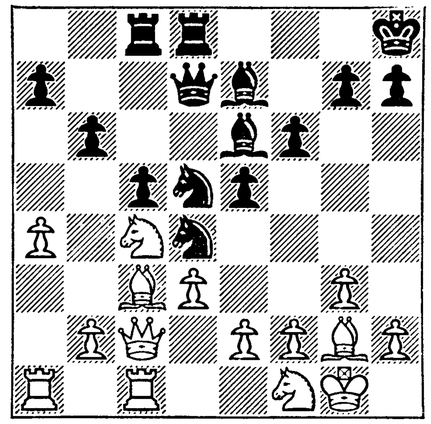
11 ... Q–Q2
12 Q–Q2 P–QKt3
13 KR–B1 QR–B1
14 Q–Q1 K–R1
15 B–Q2 KR–Q1
16 Q–Kt3 Kt–B2
17 B–B3 R–QKt1
18 Q–B2 Kt–Q4
19 Kt(3)–Q2 R(Kt)–QB1
20 Kt–B1 Kt–Q5!

Black dominates the whole board. White cannot set up even the ghost of a counter-game; he is forced to look on passively while his opponent reorganizes his ranks for a decisive attack.

21 Q–Q1 B–Kt5

Black's design is now clear. White is to be compelled to exchange at Q4; but this opens the K file, after which the Rooks can attack the backward pawn. White cannot advance the K pawn, for this would lead to the loss of the Q pawn.

Position after Black's 20th move



22 B(B3)×Kt KP×B
23 Q–Q2 B–B1

Clearing the K file.

24 R–K1 R–K1
25 P–R4

The Knight must be developed at least "somewhere or other." With his next move Black offers an exchange of Bishops, which White avoids for the moment, as he wishes to keep the Bishop for defence of the KP.

25 ... B–R6
26 B–B3 R–K2
27 Kt–R2 R(B)–K1
28 K–R1 B–K3

With the obvious object of transferring the Bishop to Q4, where it will hold a stronger position. Incidentally, White might have had an opportunity to play P–Kt4 and R–Kt1, cutting off the Bishop.

29 P–Kt3 Kt–Kt5

White hoped for 29 ..., Kt–B6, when he would have played 30 P–K4, advancing the backward pawn.

30 B–Kt2 B–Q4
31 Kt–B3

Still avoiding the exchange.

31 ... R–KB2

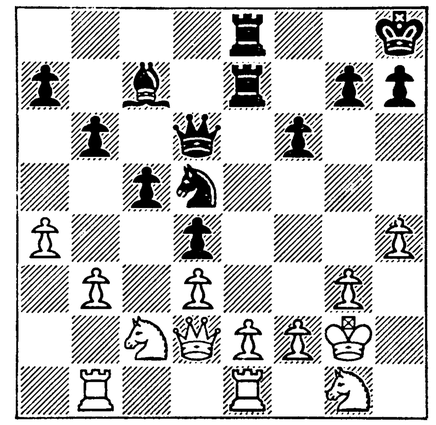
The Bishop at B1 must be brought into action.

32 K–R2 B–Q3
33 B–R3 Q–Q1
34 QR–Kt1 R(B)–K2
35 Kt–Kt1 B–QB2
36 Kt–R3 B–Kt2!

Now White himself is forced to seek exchange of Bishops, as he must not allow 37 ..., Q–Q4. Black's pieces are splendidly placed, and he is ready for the decisive attack. White's position is hopeless.

37 B–Kt2 B×B
38 K×B Kt–Q4
39 Kt–B2 Q–Q3!

Position after Black's 39th move



There is no defence against 40 ..., Kt–K6 ch.

40 Kt–QR3 Kt–K6 ch
41 K–R1 Kt–Kt5
42 Q–B4

Desperation! Both 42 R–KB1, Q–Q4 ch; and 42 K–Kt2, Kt×P; 43 K×Kt, Q×P ch; 44 K–B1, R–K6; 45 Kt–B3, Q–R6 ch; 46 K–Kt1, B–R7 ch are bad for White.

42 ... Q×Q
43 P×Q Kt×BP ch
44 K–Kt2 Kt×QP
Resigns

NINETEEN THIRTY-THREE

THIS year was rich in chess events. During the previous December a training tournament of six masters had begun at the House of Scientists. It consisted of two rounds, and ended in January, 1933.

I began by losing to P. Romanovsky, and rather later to A. Ilyin-Zhenevsky. But, thanks to the two-round system, I managed to put matters right and finished by winning first place.

In the spring of 1933 there was a Masters' tournament in Leningrad. There were fourteen players, and after a tense struggle Romanovsky and I took joint first place.

The main event of the year was the U.S.S.R. Eighth Championship, which was held in August, also in Leningrad. It aroused very great interest. The Seventh Championship, held two years before, had not attracted all the finest Soviet players, notably Levenfish and Romanovsky being absent; but now all the masters of the older and the younger generation were competitors. The tournament ended in the victory of the younger men, and I once more won the Soviet Championship.

I played what was probably my best game of those years at this tournament, against V. Rauzer (No. 31). It was published in many of the world's periodicals; I think it was the first game of mine to become widely known.

During this time Ilyin-Zhenevsky was Councillor to the Soviet Embassy at Prague, and in the September Grand-Master Flohr, then champion of Czechoslovakia, suggested to him that a match should be organized between the Czech and the Soviet champion. The proposal was adopted, and Flohr arrived in Moscow not long after. The first half of the match took place in the Hall of Pillars in the House of the Trades Unions. It went unfavourably for the Soviet champion. In the first game I was caught in a simple trap, and in the sixth I suffered defeat in a difficult endgame.

The second half of the match was played at Leningrad, in the Great Hall of the Conservatoire. Flohr already felt confident of victory, and I rather think the "experts" shared his opinion. However, in the ninth game I at last won, and my opponent, rather disconcerted, failed to put up adequate opposition the next day. The result was the unexpected one of + 2, — 2 = 8![1]

One result of this match was that the young generation of Soviet masters received its first international recognition.

U.S.S.R. CHAMPIONSHIP

August

No. 31. *Sicilian Defence*

V. Rauzer (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–QB4
2 Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3 P–Q4	P×P
4 Kt×P	Kt–B3
5 Kt–QB3	P–Q3
6 B–K2	

Sometimes, on Rauzer's advice, 6 B–Kt5 is played, preventing 6 ..., P–KKt3. So if Black wishes to adopt the "dragon" variation he must play

[1] Two wins each, and eight draws.

2 ..., P–Q3; 3 P–Q4, P×P; 4 Kt×P, Kt–B3; 5 Kt–QB3, P–KKt3. When we played this particular game Rauzer had not made his researches.

6 ... P–KKt3

For a long time "theory" regarded the "dragon" variation as not very satisfactory for Black, but it has reappeared in tournament practice.

7 B–K3 B–Kt2
8 Kt–Kt3

A useful move, as otherwise Black frees his play with P–Q4. Black's next move is regarded as the strongest.

8 ... B–K3
9 P–B4 O–O
10 O–O

Regarding 10 P–Kt4, see the Alekhine–Botvinnik game, No. 53, *infra*, and the Kann–Botvinnik game, No. 50, *infra*.

10 ... Kt–QR4
11 Kt×Kt

The Black Knight could occupy a good position at B5, but it should not have been exchanged off, especially as the exchange had the effect of developing White's pieces.

The soundness of 10 ..., Kt–QR4 has been proved by Becker. The point is that after 11 P–B5, B–B5; 12 P–K5, B×B; 13 Q×B, QP×P; 14 QR–Q1, Q–B2; 15 Kt–Kt5, Q–B5! White does not win the exchange. Apparently R. Spielmann found the right method of play here in 1934: 11 P–B5, B–B5; 12 B–Q3!

11 ... Q×Kt

The opening phase has ended, it would seem in Black's favour. His further play is beset with fewer difficulties than White's.

12 B–B3

The preliminary 12 Q–Q2 should have been preferred.

12 ... B–B5
13 R–K1 KR–Q1
14 Q–Q2 Q–B2

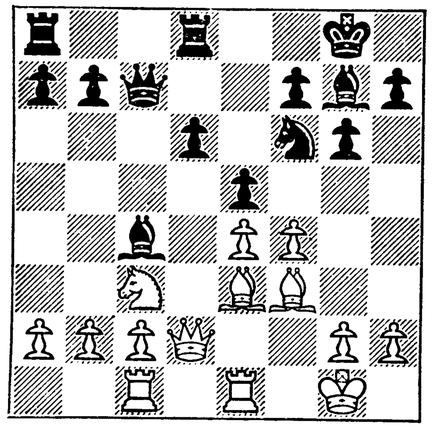
In certain variations 15 Kt–Q5 is unpleasant, forcing exchange of Queens.

15 QR–B1

After this passive move White at once gets involved in serious complications. The simplest here is Q–KB2, distracting Black from his plan of threatening the QRP.

15 ... P–K4

Position after Black's 15th move



If White realized the point of this move he would continue simply 16 P×P and 17 Q–B2, with an equal game; but to an immediate 16 Q–B2 Black would reply as in the text: 16 ..., P–Q4, getting a good game, e.g. 17 KP×P (17 BP×P, Kt×P), P×P!; 18 B×RP, Kt×QP; 19 B×Kt, B×B; 20 Kt×B (20 B–Kt6, Q–B5), R×Kt, etc.

16 P–QKt3 P–Q4!!

It seems this sacrifice is sound in all variations. Now 17 ..., P–Q5 threatens.

17 KP×P P–K5!
18 P×B

White looks for counter-chances in acceptance of the sacrifice, choosing, it would seem, the most expedient way. This is evident from the following variations:

(1) 18 B×P, Kt×B; 19 Kt×Kt, B×P; 20 Q–Q3 (not 20 Kt–Kt3, because of 20 ..., B–QB6), Q–B3; 21 B–B2, R–K1; and 22 ..., B×KKtP.

(2) 18 Kt×P, Kt×P; 19 K–R1, Kt×B; 20 Q×Kt, B–Q5; 21 Q–Q2! If Black now wins the exchange by ..., B–Kt7 the situation is extremely complicated, and dangerous for Black owing to the weakness of his KR1–QR8 diagonal. But, as Becker showed, White's attack can still be repulsed, e.g. 21 ..., B–Kt7 (21 ..., B–K3; 22 P–B4, B–K4; 23 Q–B2, B×KBP also in Black's favour); 22 Q–Kt4, B×R (one can also continue as Tarrasch suggested: 22 ..., B–Q4; 23 R–Kt1, Q×QBP); 23 Kt–B6 ch!, K–R1!; 24 Q–B3, B–Q7; 25 Q–Kt2, B–K3!; 26 Kt–Q5 dis. ch (26 P–B4, Q–R4), B–B6; 27 Kt×B, K–Kt1; 28 Kt–K4, Q×KBP; 29 Kt–B6 ch, K–B1, to Black's advantage.

18 ... P×B
19 P–QB5 Q–R4
20 R(K)–Q!

This gives Black a forced win. Bad of course, is 20 P–Q6 (to meet the threat of 20 ..., Kt×P), Kt–Kt5; 21 Kt–K4, Q×Q; 22 B×Q (22 Kt×Q, Kt×B; and 23 ..., B–Q5), P–B7 ch; 23 Kt×P, B–Q5 in Black's favour. Also after 20 P×P, Kt×P; 21 Kt×Kt, Q×Q; 22 B×Q, R×Kt White gets a far from pleasant endgame with a weak pawn formation.

The correct continuation is 20 Q–Q3!, e.g. 20 ..., Kt–Kt5; 21 Kt–K4, P–B4; 22 Kt–Kt5, P–B7 ch; 23 B×P, Kt×B; 24 K×Kt, Q×P ch; 25 K–Kt3, Q×QP (25 ..., R×P; 26 Q–Kt3); 26 Q×Q, R×Q and the opponents have approximately equal chances in the endgame.

20 ... Kt–Kt5!
21 B–Q4

All the same, preference should have been given to 21 Kt–K4, but even then after 21 ..., Q×Q; 22 B×Q, B–Q5 ch; 23 K–R1, P×P ch; 24 K×P, R×P Black has every justification for counting on victory in the endgame.

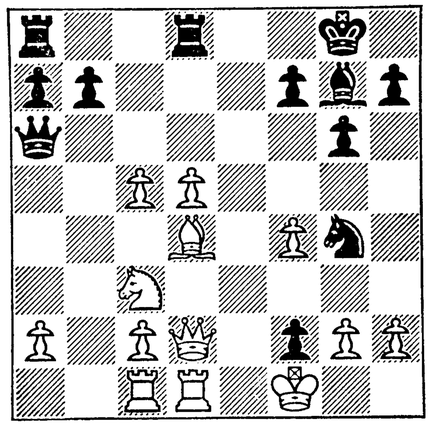
But now follows an unexpected mating attack with Queen and Knight, the Queen playing the decisive role, transferring in three moves from the Q to the K side.

21 ... P–B7 ch
22 K–B1

22 K–R1 could be followed by 22 ..., R×P!; 23 Kt×R, P–B8(Q) ch! and White has lost his Queen.

22 ... Q–R3 ch

Position after Black's 22nd move



23 Q–K2

Other defences are still worse: 23 Kt–K2, R×P; or 23 Q–Q3, B×B; 24 Q×Q, Kt–K6 ch; 25 K–K2, P–B8(Q) ch; 26 R×Q, P×Q and White has lost a piece.

23 ... B×B
24 R×B Q–KB3!
25 R(B)–Q1

Or 25 Q–Q3, R–K1; 26 R–K4, R×R; 27 Kt×R, Q×BP; and there is no defence against 28 ..., Kt×P ch; but if 26 P–Kt3, then 26 ..., R–K6; 27 Q–Q2, QR–K1.

25 ... Q–R5
26 Q–Q3 R–K1
27 R–K4 P–B4!
28 R–K6 Kt×RP ch

Black could win in various ways. Tarrasch pointed out an interesting method: 28 ..., QR–Q1!; 29 Q–Kt5 (or 29 Q–Kt3, Q×Q; 30 P×Q, R×R; 31 P×R, Kt–K6 ch), R×R; 30 P×R, R×R ch; 31 Kt×R, Kt×P ch; 32 K–K2, P–B8(Q) ch.

29 K–K2 Q×P

White resigns, as he loses the exchange and has a hopeless position: 30 R–KB1, Kt×R; 31 K×Kt, R×R; 32 P×R, Q–K4.

This game was awarded the brilliancy prize.

No. 32. *Grünfeld Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*M. Yudovich* (Black)
1 P–QB4	Kt–KB3
2 P–Q4	P–KKt3
3 Kt–QB3	P–Q4
4 Kt–B3	

Ragozin recommended this move, to be followed by 5 Q–Kt3. Here 4 Q–Kt3 immediately is also possible, this being first played in my game against Levenfish rather later in the same tournament. After the U.S.S.R. Eighth Championship the system with Q–Kt3 was thoroughly studied by many masters, but so far no absolutely reliable antidote has been found to it; the most serious reply is the counter-system developed by Smyslov, involving B–KKt5.

4 ... B–Kt2
5 Q–Kt3 P–B3
6 P×P

Now 6 ..., P×P is not good for Black because of 7 B–Kt5, but the text continuation is quite acceptable.

6 ... Kt×P

If now 7 P–K4, then 7 ..., Kt×Kt; 8 P×Kt, P–QB4!; 9 B–B4, O–O; which leads to an equal game.

7 B–Q2 O–O
8 P–K4 Kt–Kt3

At one time Tarrasch declared that in the Queen's Gambit Knights are always posted badly at QKt3, whether White or Black. This assertion has long since ceased to be accepted as true, but in the given position the Black Knight is in fact badly posted at QKt3. Its activity is reduced to the minimum, it only interferes with the development of the Q side, and serves as a convenient target to be fired at.

The right move is 8 ..., Kt×Kt; 9 B×Kt leaving White with an almost imperceptible advantage.

Black evidently assumed that White would be forced to defend the Q pawn; then would follow: 9 ..., B–K3 and 10 ..., B–QB5 or Kt–QB5. But White has a strong reply at his disposal, one which was after all not so difficult to foresee, parrying both threats.

9 QR–Q1!

It transpires that Black cannot seize the initiative. He cannot take the QP; and 9 ..., B–Kt5; 10 B–K3 does not promise well, as an exchange at KB3 is of advantage to White. So Black aims at P–K4. However, later it transpires that this plan is also impossible. Hence it is clear that Black should have played 9 ..., B–K3; 10 Q–B2, B–B5; 11 B×B, Kt×B; 12 B–B1, Kt–Q2, somewhat easing the pressure.

9 ... QKt–Q2

With the idea of playing P–K4 if opportunity arises. Before forestalling this move, White forces a weakening of QKt3.

10 P–QR4 P–QR4

Necessary, otherwise 11 P–R5.

11 B–K3

A remarkable situation has arisen. The ill-fated Knight at Kt3 is the cause of all Black's difficulties. It has not one move, and moreover it has to be defended twice over, as White continually threatens P–Q5. As a result five of Black's pieces—the Queen, a Rook, a Bishop, and the two Knights—are fettered. Now Black cannot even dream of a breakthrough with P–K4.

However, it is still not a simple matter to win.

11 ... Q–B2
12 B–K2 Q–Q3

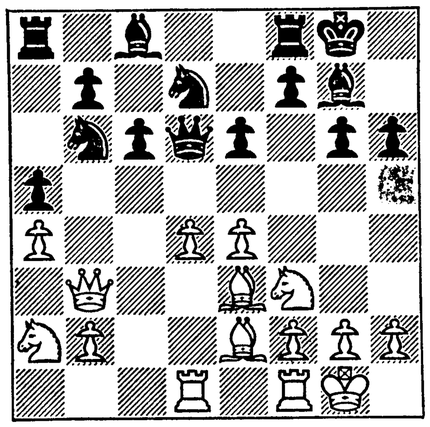
Intending with 13 ..., Q–Kt5 to eliminate the attack on the Knight. White of course must prevent this.

13 Kt–R2 P–K3

It is doubtful whether Black would do any better with 13 ..., Q–K3; 14 Q×Q, P×Q; 15 P–QKt3, Kt–B3; 16 P–Q5, Kt(Kt3)–Q2; 17 P×KP, Kt–Kt1; 18 B–QB4.

14 O–O P–R3

Position after Black's 14th move



Black's plan is to free a square for the Knight on Kt3. Only then will he be able to develop the Q side. By advancing the KBP two squares he proposes to liquidate White's KP and thus get a base for his Knight at Q4. The immediate 14 ..., P–KB4 would not achieve his end, as White would play 15 Kt–Kt5, R–K1; 16 P–B3! guarding the KP; so now Black prevents the manœuvre Kt–Kt5. At this stage White saw that if he played Kt–K5!! followed by P–KB3 Black would be fettered and would be unable to free himself. However, White mistakenly decided that P–KB4 was impossible for Black in any case. Unfortunately, as the result the game lost its point.

15 R–B1 P–KB4
16 Kt–B3

Forced. White proposed to play 16 Kt–K5, but now he noticed that Black has the simple reply 16 ..., P–B5! Nor could he do anything with 16 P–Q5, BP×QP; 17 P–K5, B×P!; 18 Kt×B, Q×Kt; and if 19 B×Kt, then Kt×B; 20 Q×Kt, Q×B. So White defends the KP and the King's Bishop.

16 ... K–R2

Parrying the threat of 17 P–Q5, which now would be met by 17 ..., P×KP!; 18 P×BP, P×Kt.

17 KR–Q1 P×P

Now there again threatens 18 P–Q5, and if 18 ..., P×KP; 19 P×KP Black's Queen is threatened. This forces Black to exchange at K5.

18 Kt×P Q–Kt5

Pawn hunting is equivalent to surrendering the game. It does not even call for any calculation to realize how dangerous is the Black King's situation. Black should have played 18 ..., Q–K2; though even in this case there is the continuation 19 Q–B2, Kt–Q4; 20 Kt–Kt3! and KKt3 has a very susceptible weakness.

19 Q–B2 Q×RP
20 P–QKt3 Q–R6

21 Kt–R4!

Nothing comes of the sacrifice: 21 Kt–Kt5 ch, P×Kt; 22 Kt×P ch, K–Kt1; 23 Q×KtP, R–B3; and Black has everything guarded.

But now Black cannot defend the pawn on Kt3. 21 ..., R–B4 is demolished by 22 P–Kt4, or if 21 ..., P–R5; 22 R–Kt1, P×P; 23 R×P, Q–R7; 24 R–Kt2, Q–R5; 25 Q–Kt1 and Black cannot force the exchange of Queens.

21 ... Q–K2
22 Kt×KtP

A win also follows 22 Kt–Kt5 ch P×Kt; 23 Kt×KtP and 24 Kt×R, double-check.

22 ... K×Kt
23 B–R5 ch!!

Black resigns, as mate is inevitable.

MATCH WITH FLOHR

November–December

NINTH GAME

No. 33. *Caro-Kann Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*S. Flohr* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–QB3
2 P–Q4	P–Q4
3 P×P	P×P
4 P–QB4	Kt–KB3
5 Kt–QB3	Kt–B3
6 B–Kt5	

I think this is the first time this system had ever been played. It is not at all easy for Black to defend Q4.

In the present game Black gives up altogether any attempt to keep the pawn on Q4 and at once gets a bad position. Of recent years many and various systems have been proposed for Black. But I am still convinced that 6 B–Kt5 is one of the strongest of continuations.

6 ... P×P

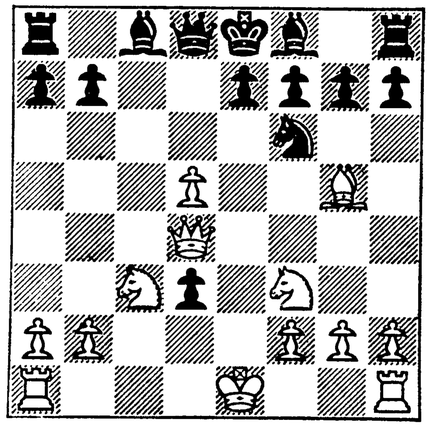
Black gives up the centre and makes it possible for White to advance his centre pawn, which makes Black's development difficult. Soon after this game theoreticians came to the conclusion that here the best continuation is 6 ..., P–K3.

7 P–Q5 Kt–K4

Analyses published in the 1930s show that after 7 ..., Kt–QR4; 8 Kt–KB3!, White gets a stronger attack for the pawn sacrifice.

8 Q–Q4 Kt–Q6 ch
9 B×Kt P×B
10 Kt–B3

Position after White's 10th move



In the first game of this match I played 10 B×Kt and got the worse game. But after analysis at home I was convinced that if 10 Kt–B3, P–K3; 11 B×Kt!, Q×B; 12 Q×QP Black has a very bad position (the Bishop at KB1 has no move, and the King is stranded in the centre), and I decided to play this variation again.

It is unnecessary to say that 10 ..., B–B4; 11 O–O is also bad, and Black cannot resist for long. White's chief advantage lies in his superior development. In all variations his

attack grows threatening before Black can bring his reserves into the battle.

Black's reply here cannot be recommended in any circumstances.

10 ... P–KKt3
11 B×Kt

Naturally this is now very strong, as by comparison with the first game of the match White has won an important tempo and his Rooks begin to work along the central files with terrible strength. In certain variations the passed QP is also very unpleasant to Black.

11 ... P×B
12 O–O Q–Kt3

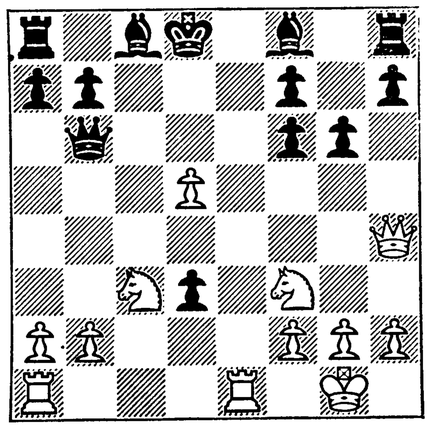
One can confidently say that Black's game is lost. There is no relief for him in 12 ..., B–K2; 13 QR–Q1! (not so good is 13 Kt–K4, Q–Kt3!; 14 P–Q6, Q×Q; 15 Kt×Q, P–B4!; 16 KR–K1, P×Kt; 17 R×P, K–Q2), O–O; 14 R×P, B–KB4; 15 R–Q2, B–Q3; 16 P–KKt4, B–B1; 17 Kt–K4, and Black must surrender. It is possible that at one point or another Black could improve on this play, but that cannot modify in any essential this estimate of the position. Black decided to reconcile himself to being unable to Castle, hoping that at Q1 the King would find a reliable haven. But unfortunately, in an open position and with a completely undeveloped army such play in the spirit of Steinitz cannot save the game.

13 KR–K1 ch K–Q1
14 Q–KR4!

The strongest continuation of the attack. With 14 Q×QP, B–Q3! it is doubtful whether White would be able to carry his positional advantage to victory.

White's main threat is 15 Kt–K5! with decisive superiority, e.g.: 14 ..., B–Q2; 15 Kt–K5, B–K1; 16 Kt–B4, Q–R3; 17 P–Q6, or 14 ..., B–Kt2; 15 Kt–K5, R–B1; 16 Q×RP. White's simplest reply to 14 ..., B–K2 is 15 P–Q6, Q×P; 16 QR–Q1!, B–Q2 (16 ..., B–KB4; 17 Kt–Q4); 17 R–K3. An alternative "desperate" defence against Kt–K5 is the one Black decides to adopt.

Position after White's 14th move



14 ... P–Kt4
15 Q–R5

15 ..., Q–B2 is followed at least by 16 Kt–K4, and the Black pawns vanish one after another. Black "develops" two pieces, but at the price of two good pawns, giving White superiority in material.

15 ... B–Q3
16 Q×BP R–B1
17 Q×RP P–Kt5!

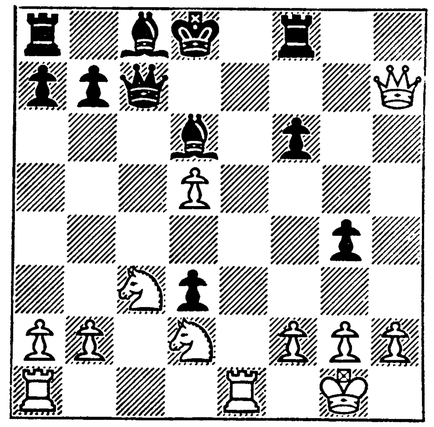
The sole chance of getting counterplay. 18 Kt–KR4 (reckoning on 18 ..., Q–B2; 19 Q×Q ch, B×Q; 20 QR–Q1) is met by 18 ..., P–Q7! and complications not entirely without possibilities for Black result. So White's withdrawal of the Knight is forced.

18 Kt–Q2 Q–B2

Naturally, 18 ..., Q×KtP is hopeless for Black, as it is followed by 19 Q×QP with unrelenting

attack. But now White must play with great care. Thus, if 19 Q×Q ch, B×Q; it is far from so simple to win the QP, and even if White did, the endgame would still present great technical difficulties. The following move shatters Black's hopes.

Position after Black's 18th move



19 Q–R6!

Weak would be 19 Q×QP, B×P ch; 20 K–B1, and the White King finds himself in a dangerous situation.

But now there is a threat of 20 Kt–Kt5. The Rook on B1 is not reliably defended, so Black hastens to cover it with the Queen.

19 ... Q–B2
20 Kt–B4 B–K4

A loss also follows 20 ..., B–Kt5; 21 P–QR3, B×Kt; 22 Kt–Q6, Q–Kt1; 23 P×B; or 20 ..., B–Kt1; 21 P–Q6, R–KKt1; 22 R–K7, Q–Kt3 (22 ..., Q×Kt; 23 Q×BP); 23 Q–KB4.

Now White captures a second pawn, in doing so depriving Black of his "pair of Bishops," and transposes to the endgame. The rest is a question of technique.

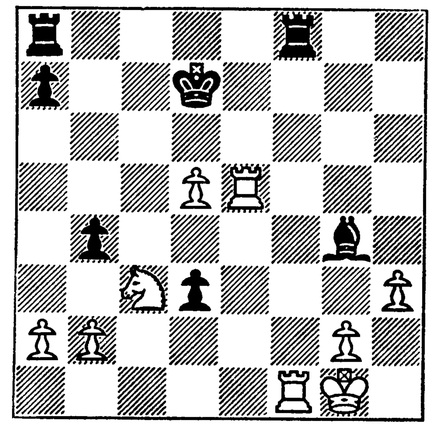
Later Tarrasch showed that White could win also with a direct attack after 21 Kt–Kt5. Yet I think that if I had again to play White in this position I would play as in the game, for in an elementary won position a master should choose the simplest road.

21 Kt×B P×Kt
22 Q–Kt5 ch Q–K2
23 Q×KP Q×Q
24 R×Q B–B4
25 R–KB1 K–Q2
26 P–B3 P–Kt4

Yet another attempt to complicate the game.

27 P×P B×P
28 P–KR3 P–Kt5

Position after Black's 28th move



29 Kt–K4!

The last finesse. If 29 P×B, P×Kt; 30 P×P, R×R ch; 31 K×R, R–QB1 the result would still be in doubt, as the White pawns would fall one after another.

With the next move Black allows the White King to pass into the centre, after which further resistance is futile. But even if 29 ..., B–K7; 30 R×R, R×R; 31 P–Q6!, R–B8 ch; 32 K–R2, R–Q8; 33 R–K7 ch, K–B3; 34 P–Q7, K–B2; 35 Kt–B5! White queens his pawn.

29 ... R×R ch
30 K×R R–B1 ch
31 K–K1 B–B4

If 31 ..., B–K7; 32 Kt–Kt3.

32 P–Kt4 B–Kt3
33 R–K6 Resigns

TENTH GAME

No. 34. *Dutch Defence*

S. Flohr (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–K3
2 P–QB4	P–KB4
3 P–KKt3	

Theoretically this continuation (the King's fianchetto) is regarded as White's best line against the Dutch Defence. In the fourth game of our match Flohr played 3 Kt–QB3.

3 ...	Kt–KB3
4 B–Kt2	B–K2

Black refrains from the exchange of Bishops (4 ..., B–Kt5 ch) in order to avoid simplification, and plans to employ the stonewall formation (see also game No. 4, *supra*). When this game was played it was considered that this variation ceded White unquestioned superiority, but the system contains quite a lot of poison, and against an opponent who has not thorough knowledge of the game it can be applied confidently.

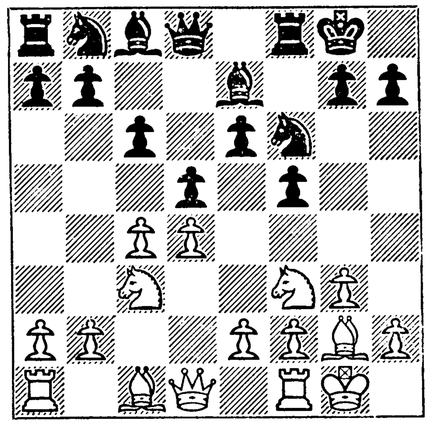
5 Kt–QB3	P–Q4
6 Kt–B3	

At one time Grünfeld recommended 6 Kt–R3. This move was adopted in the Capablanca–Botvinnik game (Hastings, 1934–35) where White obtained superiority. So in the preceding move Black's most exact play would have been 5..., O–O and only after 6 Kt–KB3 should he have played P–Q4; but if 5 ..., O–O; 6 Kt–R3 Black can reply 6 ..., P–Q3.

6 ...	P–B3
7 O–O	O–O
8 P–Kt3	

Ignorance of the variation is beginning to reveal itself. Here Flohr does not choose the strongest continuation.

Position after Black's 7th move



At this time it was considered that 8 B–B4 can give White the better game. Chekhover's system is now regarded as very strong: 8 Q–B2!, Q–K1; 9 B–Kt5! followed by B×Kt, reducing to a minimum the Black forces available for attack on the K side. The fianchetto of the Queen's Bishop has one serious defect: it weakens KB4, after which Black's pressure on the K side increases considerably.

8 ...	Q–K1

The customary move in this variation to transfer the Queen to KR5, both for attack, and to defend the KB pawn.

9 B–Kt2	QKt–Q2
10 Q–Q3	

Another slightly inexact move. The Queen is more effective on B2. Now the simplest would have been 10 Kt–KKt5, B–Q3; 11 P–KB4, closing the position and depriving Black of his chances of attack on the K side.

10 ...	Q–R4

Just in time, for White threatens 11 P×P! opening the QB file.

11 P×QP	

White should make this exchange only when it gives some advantage at once. Otherwise it leads only to a deterioration of the position.

The continuation 11 Kt–Q2 or 11 Kt–K1 does not suit White because of 11 ..., P–K4!; 12 P×QP, P–K5. But from this it is evident that the Bishop was badly placed at QKt2 and the mistake should have been recognized, transferring it to KB4, so eliminating any possibility of a break-through with ..., P–K4.

11 ...	KP×P
12 Kt–Q2	

This also is a mistake. White's sound plan consisted in playing P–KB4 and capturing K5. But this necessitated 12 Kt–K1! followed by P–KB4 and Kt–KB3–K5. But now Black can prevent this manœuvre.

12 ...	Kt–K5
13 P–B3	

Exactly! 13 P–B4 is followed by 13 ..., Kt×Kt(Q2)!; 14 Q×Kt, Kt–B3; and Black controls K5, while it is extremely difficult for White to transfer the Knight to his K5.

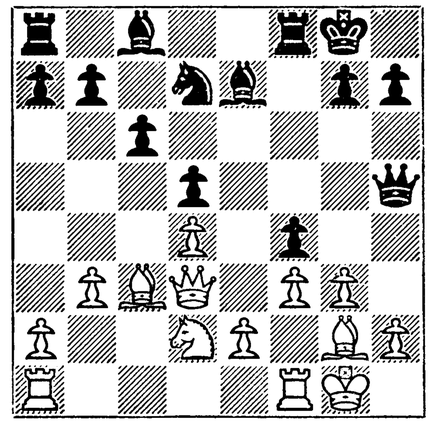
13 ...	Kt×Kt(B)

The only way. After 13 ..., Kt×Kt(Q2); 14 Q×Kt White would succeed in defending KB4.

14 B×Kt	P–B5!

The signal for attack. Black develops continuous pressure on the K side, and it is not easy for White to free himself. Possibly 15 KR–Q1 would be stronger than the text move, leaving K1 free for the Bishop. The Rook must vacate B1 to make room for the Knight to defend the KKtP.

Position after Black's 14th move



15 KR–K1	B–Q3
16 Kt–B1	R–B2

An important move. 16 ..., Kt–B3 is not good, as with 17 B–Q2! White would attack the KBP, and if 17 ..., P×P; 18 P×P the White Bishop would operate actively along the QB1–KR6 diagonal. So Black frees KB1 for his Knight. Even so it would be better for White now to play 17 B–Q2.

Instead, with his next move he closes the QB1–KR6 diagonal, after which Black exchanges at KKt6 with advantage. Bad for White is 17 P–K4, QP×P!; 18 Q×P (18 BP×P, P–B6!), Kt–B3.

17 P–K3	P×KtP
18 Kt×P	

Forced. 18 P×P might be followed by either 18 ..., R×P! or simply 18 ..., Q–Kt4; 19 P–K4, B×P; 20 Kt×B, Q×Kt; 21 P×P, Kt–B1; or 21 ..., Kt–B3, to Black's clear advantage.

18 ...	Q–R5
19 Kt–B1	Kt–B3
20 R–K2	B–Q2

White pins great hopes to the transfer of the Bishop to KKt3, but it cannot essentially improve his position.

21 B–K1	Q–Kt4

22 B–Kt3 B×B
23 Kt×B

After 23 P×B, Kt–R4; White is forced to play 24 P–KKt4, as 24 K–R2 is met by 24 ..., Kt×P!

23 ... P–KR4!

This is the beginning of the decisive attack. The threat of P–R5–6, winning a piece, forces a further weakening of White's pawn position.

24 P–B4 Q–Kt5
25 R–KB2

Possibly 25 R–KB1 would have been somewhat better.

25 ... P–R5
26 B–B3

An obvious oversight. In justice' name we note that even with 26 P–KR3!, Q–K3 (26 ..., Q×Kt; 27 R–B3); 27 Kt–B1, Kt–K5 White's position is a lost one.

26 ... P×Kt

The Queen-sacrifice is decisive.

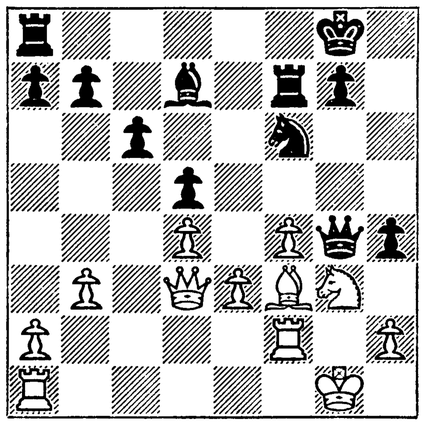
27 B×Q P×R ch
28 K–Kt2

After 28 K×P, Kt×B ch; the KP also is lost.

28 ... Kt×B
29 P–KR3 Kt–B3
30 K×P Kt–K5 ch
Resigns

31 K–Kt2 is followed by 31 ..., B×P ch, or the transfer R–K1, K3–KKt3 with a mating attack.

Position after White's 26th move



NINETEEN THIRTY-FOUR

AFTER the match with Flohr Soviet masters had a further test in the tournament in which the foreign players Euwe and Kmoch took part.

Euwe was already one of the strongest grand masters of the West, while Kmoch was an experienced international master.

Euwe took the lead at first, but then he lost to Riumin and Rabinovich and lost all chance of being highly placed. I also began by losing to Lisitsin, but I gradually improved my position. A decisive game with Rabinovich, which lasted ten hours, ended in his defeat, and so I took first place, half a point above Riumin and Romanovsky. Rabinovich was fourth, Kann was fifth, Euwe sixth, and Kmoch and Yudovich jointly occupied seventh and eighth places.

This second international "examination" was passed with honour by the Soviet masters, not only by their position in the score-table, but also by their creative play.

Among other chess events of 1934 I must mention the Trade Union Match between Moscow and Leningrad, in which I had two interesting games with Belavenietz.

LENINGRAD–MOSCOW TRADE UNION MATCH

May

No. 35. *Queen's Indian Defence*

S. Belavenietz (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–KB3	P–QKt3
4 P–KKt3	B–Kt2
5 B–Kt2	B–K2
6 O–O	O–O
7 Kt–B3	P–Q4
8 Kt–K5	Q–B1
9 B–B4	

A single formal move can spoil any position. With 9 B–B4 White loses the initiative at the least. The right move, of course, is 9 P×P, to restrict the Queen's Bishop's sphere of operations.

9 ... P×P
10 Kt×QBP

This is a simply losing mistake, whereas after 10 Q–R4, B×B; 11 K×B, Q–Kt2 ch; 12 K–Kt1, Kt–Q4; 13 B–Q2, Kt×Kt; 14 P×Kt, P–QB4 (14 ..., P–Kt4; 15 R–Kt1, P–QR3; 16 Q×BP); 15 Q×BP, R–QB1; 16 Q–Q3, Kt–B3 Black's position is only very slightly better. Now White gets a weak QP.

10 ... B×B
11 K×B Q–Kt2 ch

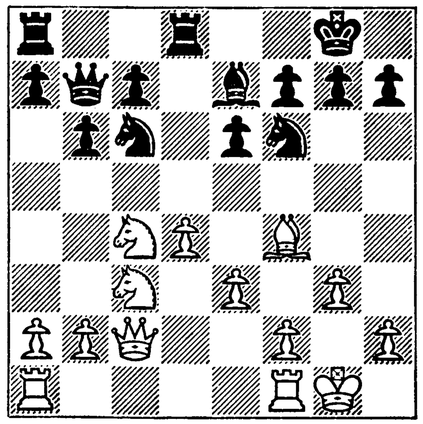
Not 11 ..., R–Q1 at once, as White could continue 12 P–K3, P–B4; 13 Q–B3! saving the QP.

12 K–Kt1 R–Q1
13 Q–B2!

The Q4 pawn is indirectly defended, as 13 ..., R×QP is met by 14 Kt–Kt5, R–Q2; 15 Kt–K5, and White wins Black's QBP square.

13 ... Kt–B3
14 P–K3

Position after White's 14th move



An extremely interesting situation. At first glance it seems that Black can win the Bishop at B4, by continuing 14 ..., Kt–Q4; and if 15 Kt×Kt, P×Kt; 16 Kt–K5, Kt×Kt; 17 B×Kt, P–KB3; 18 Q×BP, R–Q2 the Bishop is lost. But if 14 ..., Kt–Q4 White saves the piece by Q–K4! as 15 ..., P–KKt4; 16 B×KtP, B×B; 17 Q–Kt4, P–KR3; 18 P–KR4, involves great complications. So Black decides on the Rook sacrifice, which gives him an all but irresistible attack.

14 ... R×P!!
15 P×R Kt×P
16 Q–B1

After this Black's sacrifice is more than justified, as at any moment he can win back the piece. Even so 16 Q–R4, Kt–B6 ch; 17 K–R1, P–K4! (forestalling the manœuvre Kt–K3–Kt2); 18 B–K3, P–QR3!! (or the preliminary KR4) is more satisfactory and there is no defence against Black's combined threats.

16 ... Kt–B6 ch
17 K–R1 P–K4
18 B–K3 Kt–Kt5

Being a Rook down, Black gets nervous and tries to force the game.

But there was no necessity. White is in a helpless position and so Black should have intensified his pressure with 18 ..., P–KR4 or 18 ..., R–Q1.

If White then played 19 Kt–K2, in order to transfer the Knight to Kt1, 19 ..., Kt–Kt5 would be relevant, for in that case White has abandoned control of his K4.

Now Black wins back a piece, but finds himself forced to transpose to the endgame, where his chances of winning are minimal.

19 Q–B2	Kt–Q7 dis. ch
20 K–Kt1	Kt–B6 ch
21 K–R1	Kt–Q7 dis. ch
22 K–Kt1	Kt×Kt
23 B–B1	Q–B6

Otherwise 24 Q–K2! is very unpleasant.

24 Q–K2	Q×Q
25 Kt×Q	P–K5

Fixing his KB6.

26 P–QKt3	Kt(B)–K4
27 P–KR3	Kt–B6 ch
28 K–Kt2	Kt(5)–K4
29 B–K3	P–KB4
30 KR–Q1	K–B2
31 B–Q4	

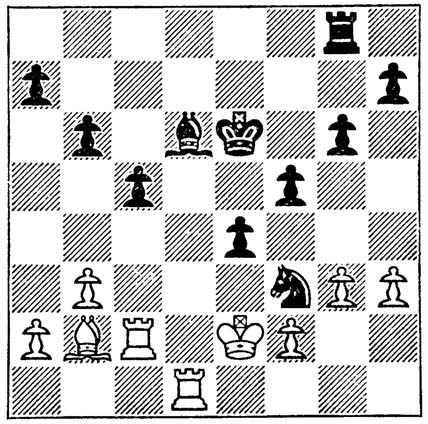
Very weak: White loses several tempi. The logical continuation is 31 QR–B1, P–QB4; 32 R–Q5, P–Kt3; 33 R(B)–Q1, and Black has only a microscopic advantage. Later White is deprived of the possibility of doubling Rooks, and he has to be content with passive defence.

31 ...	Kt–Q6
32 B–B3	R–Q1

32 ..., P–Kt3 at once is simpler.

33 K–B1	B–Q3
34 Kt–B1	Kt–B4
35 Kt–K2	Kt–Q6
36 Kt–B1	Kt×Kt
37 QR×Kt	P–KKt3
38 B–Kt2	K–K3
39 K–K2	P–QB4
40 R–B2	R–KKt1

Position after Black's 40th move



In this highly instructive situation the game was adjourned and, in accordance with the rules of the tournament, submitted for adjudication. The jury of the match—the masters N. Grigoriev, I. Rabinovich, and P. Romanovsky—refused to make any decision without detailed analysis. However, the organizers of the match decided not to await an analysis and declared the position drawn.

As was to have been expected, the analysis of the adjourned position led to rather different conclusions. First let us assume that White pursues passive tactics, e.g. playing 41 R(B)–B1. If then Black succeeds in exchanging Bishops and occupying Q5 with his Knight, the game is obviously decided. It is easy to see that after 41 ..., B–K4; 42 B×B, Kt×B! Black achieves a win without difficulty. But if White plays 41 K–K3, Black can reply simply 41 ..., R–QB1, so threatening 42 ..., Kt–Q5.

As passive tactics lead swiftly to defeat White has no other course than to seek complications with 41 P–QKt4. But if Black plays at once 40 ..., P–QR4 this possibility of counter-play is eliminated. Black must accept the sacrifice, as otherwise, as analysis shows, it is hardly possible for him to win. But after 41 ..., P×P; 42 R–B6, R–Q1; 43 P–R3 (otherwise Black gradually frees himself with R–Q2, K–K2 and B–K4 and, having three pawns for the exchange, should win), P–Kt6; 44 P–QR4, Kt–K4; 45 B×Kt, K×B; 46 R–B3, P–Kt7; 47 R–Kt1, B–Kt5; 48 R–B2, B–B4; 49 R(Kt)×P, R–Q6; or 47 R–Kt3, R–QB1; 48 R×P (at Kt7), R–B5; and Black's superiority is sufficient to win.

These variations essentially exhaust the position. Altogether it was an interesting game, though it has to be admitted that neither player proved quite equal to the problems confronting him.

No. 36. *Queen's Gambit Declined*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*S. Belavenietz* (Black)
1 Kt–KB3	P–Q4
2 P–QB4	P–QB3
3 P–Q4	Kt–B3
4 P–K3	P–K3
5 B–Q3	QKt–Q2
6 Kt–B3	P×P
7 B×BP	P–QKt4

The so-called Meran Variation, introduced by Rubinstein.

8 B–Q3	P–QR3
9 P–K4	P–QB4
10 P–K5	P×P
11 Kt×KtP	Kt×P
12 Kt×Kt	P×Kt
13 O–O	

White chooses Relstab's Attack, whereas to-day 13 Q–B3 is preferred. It is interesting to note that, when commentating a game in which 13 Q–B3 was played, followed by 13 ..., B–Kt5 ch; 14 K–K2, R–QKt1; 15 Q–Kt3! Euwe remarked that even with Black's best reply 15 ..., Q–Q3!, after 16 Kt–KB3 White has the better endgame. Evidently this was a misapprehension, as after 15 ..., Q–Q3; 16 Kt–KB3, Q×Q; 17 RP×Q, B–Q3!; 18 Kt×P, B–Q2 it is difficult to see why Black's game is inferior.

I still think that 13 O–O promises White more chances.

13 ...	Q–Q4
14 Q–K2	R–R4

Belavenietz had prepared this "novelty." But of course it is not by this means that the Relstab Attack can be refuted! The Rook at R4 has no scope, and White has an almost forced win.

15 P–B4!

An indispensable preliminary move. For if opportunity occurs Black plays P–Kt5 with an attack on the Knight at K5, so it is necessary to control this square at once. In doing so White defends the KKt square. Naturally, the formal 15 B–Kt5 and then P–KB4 would be weaker, as the Queen's Bishop is necessary for attack on the Rook at R4.

15 ...	B–Q3

Black must develop his King's Bishop without delay. 15 ..., B–Kt2 is followed by the beautiful blow 16 P–QR4!, P×P; 17 B–Q2, and Black perishes because of the threat 18 B–Kt5 ch.

16 B–Q2	P–Kt5
17 P–QR3!	

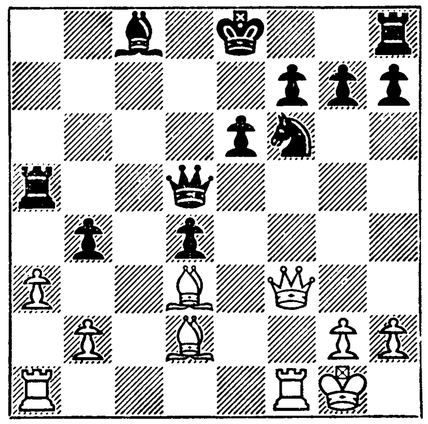
Temporarily surrendering a second pawn, in return for an overwhelming attack. 17 Kt–B4, R–R2; 18 Kt–Kt6, Q–Kt2 does not lead to the desired result; Black has a satisfactory defence.

But now, in view of the threat 18 Kt–B4 Black is forced to fight for

his K4. 17 ..., R–R2 is followed by at any rate 18 Kt–B6!

17 ... B×Kt
18 P×B Q×P
19 Q–B3 Q–Q4

Position after Black's 19th move



A better defence is 19 ..., R–R2; 20 QR–K1 (but not 20 Q–B6 ch, B–Q2; 21 Q–Kt6, Q–B2; 22 Q×KtP, which Black was afraid of because of 22 ..., Kt–Q4; 23 Q×QP, O–O), Q–Q4; 21 Q–Kt3, B–Kt2 (or 21 ..., P×P; 22 R×Kt, P×R; 23 Q–Kt7, R–B1; 24 B–Kt4, R–K2; 25 R–QB1, B–Kt2; 26 P×P, B–B3; 27 P–QR4); 22 Q–Kt8 ch (or simply 22 B×KtP), K–Q2; 23 B–Kt5 ch, Q×B; 24 Q×R (at R7), Q–Q4; 25 R–B2, and White has all the chances of winning. With the text move Black loses a tempo by comparison with the foregoing variation, as if 19 ..., R–R2 White is compelled to play 20 QR–K1, which is now useless.

20 Q–Kt3 R–R2

Black's situation is hopeless. He is not saved by 20 ..., Kt–R4; 21 Q–B7, O–O; 22 B×KtP. It is interesting that White's position is now so strong that he is ensured the win even if he gives the next move to his opponent, as then the variation given in the preceding note should arise.

21 R×Kt P×R
22 Q–Kt7 R–B1
23 B×KtP R–K2
24 R–QB1 B–Kt2
25 R–B5 Resigns

TOURNAMENT WITH EUWE PARTICIPATING

August

No. 37. *Queen's Gambit Declined*

M. Botvinnik (White) — *V. Alatortsev* (Black)

1 P–Q4 P–K3
2 P–QB4 P–Q4
3 Kt–KB3 B–K2

As Alatortsev explained after the game, the idea of this move is that Black plays Kt–KB3 only after the White Knight has gone to QB3. In essence it all amounts simply to a change in the order of moves.

4 Kt–B3 Kt–KB3
5 B–Kt5 O–O
6 P–K3 P–QR3

This move is usually made only after QKt–Q2 and P–QB3. True, Black later had the option of returning to the usual variation, but to do so would have needed very exact play. So the course taken by Black can hardly be recommended.

7 P×P P×P

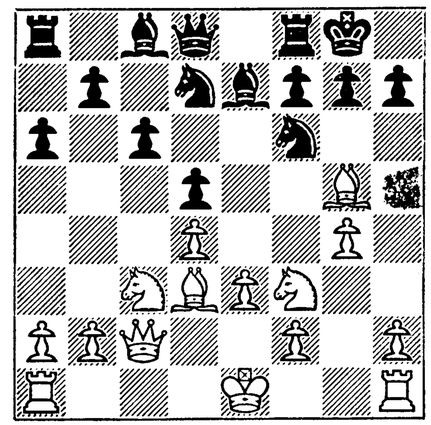
7 ..., Kt×P is worth considering.

8 B–Q3 P–QB3

This natural move turns out to be a serious mistake. After the game Alatortsev pointed out the right continuation 8 ..., QKt–Q2!, and if 9 Q–B2, R–K1; 10 P–KKt4, Kt–KB1! Black gets a satisfactory game

9 Q–B2 QKt–Q2
10 P–KKt4!

Position after White's 10th move



With the definite threat through 11 B×Kt, Kt×Kt; 12 P–Kt5 of winning the KRP. The pawn sacrifice 10 ..., R–K1; 11 B×Kt, Kt×Kt; 12 P–Kt5, Kt–K5; 13 Kt×Kt, P×Kt; 14 B×P, P–KKt3; 15 P–KR4, B–Q3, gives Black some counter-play, but White's superiority in material should in due course make itself felt.

With 10 ..., P–KR3; 11 B–B4 (or 11 B×Kt) White retains a strong attack. Possibly Black has a better defence with 10 ..., P–KKt3, though even then the continuation 11 P–KR3 and 12 O–O–O is to White's advantage.

Black chooses the weakest of continuations, at once opening files for White on the K side.

10 ... Kt×KtP
11 B×P ch K–R1
12 B–B4

After 12 P–R4, 12 ..., P–KKt3; 13 P–R5 (13 B×B, Q×B; 14 P–R5, P–KKt4; and 15 ..., Kt–R3; or 13 B×KtP, BP×B; 14 Q×P, Q–K1), B×B; 14 P×P, P–KB4! and Black should win.

White avoids premature exchanges.

12 ... Kt(Q2)–B3
13 B–Q3 Kt–R4

Black's situation is serious, but manœuvres with the Knight are completely fruitless. In any case it is doubtful whether any method of defence can be found for Black. White can unhurriedly bring up reserves for the decisive blow.

14 P–KR3 Kt(Kt5)–B3
15 B–K5 Kt–Kt1
16 O–O–O Kt–R3
17 QR–Kt1 B–K3
18 Q–K2 B–KB4

An oversight which hastens Black's collapse. Even so there is no defence against 19 Kt–Kt5 or 19 Kt–R4.

19 B×B Kt×B
20 Kt–KR4 Resigns

No. 38. *Slav Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White) — *I. Rabinovich* (Black)

1 P–QB4 P–QB3
2 P–Q4 P–Q4
3 Kt–QB3 Kt–KB3
4 P–K3 P–K3
5 Kt–B3 QKt–Q2
6 B–Q3 B–K2

Black avoids the Meran Variation (6 ..., P×P; 7 B×BP, P–QKt4; 8 B–Q3, P–QR3; etc.,) evidently with a view to adopting the so-called "improved Slav Defence": 7 O–O, O–O; 8 P–K4, P×KP; 9 Kt×P, P–QKt3. However, White avoids premature simplification.

7 O–O O–O
8 P–QKt3 P–QKt3
9 Q–K2 B–Kt2
10 KR–Q1 Q–B2
11 B–Kt2 QR–Q1
12 QR–B1

White pursues a waiting tactic, planning eventually to establish his

Knight on K5; but he plays insufficiently exactly and only induces Black to move his Queen to a better square. The right move is 12 P–KR3 at once.

12 ... Q–Kt1
13 P–KR3

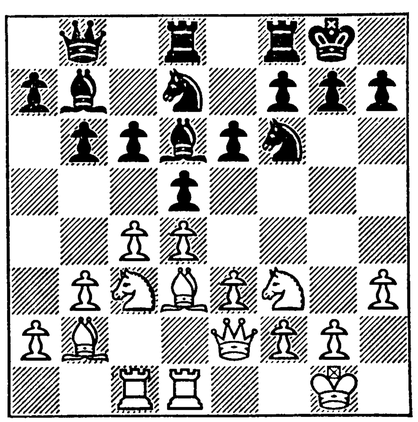
There is nothing in 13 Kt–K5, Kt×Kt; 14 P×Kt, Kt–Q2; 15 P–B4, Kt–B4; 16 B–B2, P×P. Black should now, I think, play 13 ..., P–B4; 14 Kt–K5 with more or less the continuation 14 ..., BP×P; 15 KP×P, QP×P; 16 B×P! though even then White's position is to be preferred.

After Black's text move White opens the centre with advantage.

13 ... B–Q3

A serious error! Evidently Black was preparing for P–K4, but forgot that White also might play: P–K4. With the Black Bishop at K2 White could not play 13 P–K4, as then would have followed 13 ..., P×KP; 14 Kt×P, P–B4!; 15 Kt×Kt ch, B×Kt and White's Queen's Bishop is rendered harmless. Now the position is different: although Black's Bishop reaches KB5 with a gain of tempo, it is not well placed there, a circumstance which White later exploits.

Position after Black's 13th move



14 P–K4 P×KP

Necessary: if 14 ..., B–B5 at once, White sacrifices with 15 P–K5! and gets a stronger attack on the Black King.

15 Kt×P B–B5

15 ..., Kt×Kt; 16 Q×Kt, Kt–KB3; 17 Q–KR4 is disadvantageous for Black.

16 Kt×Kt ch

An important intermediary move: if 16 R–Kt1, Kt×Kt; 17 B×Kt, P–QB4, Black has equal chances.

16 ... Kt×Kt
17 R–Kt1 P–QB4

Black cannot delay. If he plays 17 ..., Kt–Q2 (in order after 18 ..., P–B4 to fight for control of B4 with his Knight) there follows 18 P–QKt4! and White has the superiority both in 18 ..., P–QB4; 19 QP×P, P×P; 20 P–Kt5, B×Kt; 21 Q×B, B–K4; 22 Q–K4, P–Kt3; 23 B×B, Q×B; 24 Q×Q, Kt×Q; 25 B–K2, R–Q5; 26 R×R, P×R; 27 P–KB4, P–Q6; 28 P×Kt, P×B; 29 K–B2; and in 18 ..., R–K1; 19 B–R1.

18 P×BP P×P

18 ..., B×Kt; 19 Q×B, P×P; 20 R–K1! is no better, as White still prevents B–K4.

19 Kt–K5 Q–R1

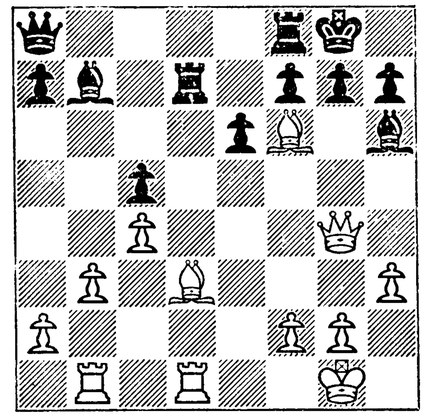
It is difficult to indicate any other possibility of counter-play. White intended to clear up the position with 20 P–Kt3. This move is possible even now, but Black would be in possession of the QR1–KR8 diagonal. However, White finds a stronger continuation.

20 Kt–Kt4 Kt×Kt
21 Q×Kt B–KR3

The other defence of KKt2 by 21 ..., P–K4, after the simple 22 B–B2! leads only to a weakening of the King's pawn. Impossible is 22 ..., R×R ch; 23 R×R, R–Q1; 24 B×RP ch, and White wins.

22 B–B6 R–Q2

Position after Black's 22nd move



If 22 ..., R–B1 Black has surrendered the Q file without a fight; but if 22 ..., R×B; 23 R×R, B–K5; then 24 R–Kt3!!, B–Kt3; 25 Q–R4, and White remains the exchange to the good.

Even so Black should have chosen the first possibility, as now with an interesting sacrifice of his two Bishops for a Rook White could get decisive superiority, namely: 23 B×P ch, K×B; 24 R×R, and then:

(1) 24 ..., P×B; 25 Q×P, B×P; 26 R×P ch, R×R; 27 Q×R ch, B–Kt2; 28 R–K1, B–K5; 29 Q–R5 ch, K–Kt1; 30 P–B3, B–B3; 31 R–K7, Q–KB1; 32 R–QB7!! and White should win.

(2) 24 ..., B–B1; 25 R–Q8, P×B; 26 R(Kt)–Q1, Q–Kt2; 27 R×R, B×R; 28 R–Q8, P–B4; 29 Q–R4 ch, B–R3; 30 R–K8, Q–Q2; 31 Q–Q8, with a won endgame for White. Neither player notices this possibility, and this reduces the value of this seemingly effective game.

Now the play passes to the endgame and is drawn out over many moves.

23 B–B1 Q–B1

The Q file is surrendered after all, but at least the Queen's position is improved.

24 R×R Q×R

25 R–Q1 Q–B2

A crucial point. White's attack has got into a blind alley, and no ways of strengthening it are evident. E.g. to 26 R–Q3 Black replies 26 ..., B–K5!; 27 B×KtP, B×B; 28 Q×B(K), R–Q1!; followed by 29 ..., P–QR4! and a safe draw, despite White's extra pawn. So White does not fall for the "allure" of "lone attacks," and sets to work to realize his pawn superiority on the Q side, exploiting his domination of the open Q file.

26 B–Kt5 B×B
27 Q×B P–KR3
28 Q–Q2 B–K5

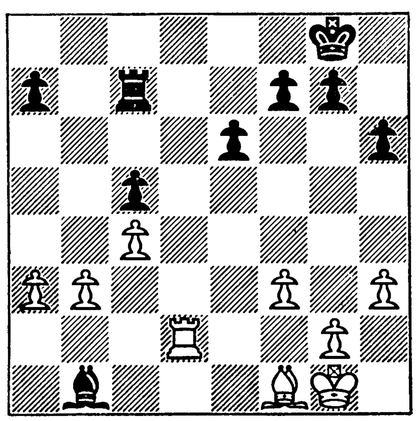
Black could keep the Bishop on the Q side, but in that case he could not compel White to exchange Queens, as in the game. On the other hand, in the ensuing endgame the Bishop on the R2–Kt8 diagonal is out of play, and White now exploits this.

29 Q–Q7 R–B1
30 P–B3 B–B7
31 R–Q2 B–Kt8

Black can compel the Queen exchange only by this threat of winning a pawn. But now White gains an important tempo for the advance on the Q side.

32 Q×Q R×Q
33 P–QR3!

Position after White's 33rd move



White's superiority in the endgame is taking on definite outlines. As the continuation 33 ..., P–QR4; 34 R–Q8 ch, K–R2; 35 R–QKt8 and 36 R–Kt5 is clearly not to Black's advantage, he is forced to allow a further advance of the QKtP.

33 ... R–Kt2
34 R–Kt2 B–Kt3
35 P–QKt4 K–B1

Both now and later Black is faced with the choice:

(1) With P–QR4 he can force the advance of the QKtP. But then White will occupy the Q file and, exploiting the weakness of the Black QR and QB pawns, should win without difficulty.

(2) Black can exchange at Kt5. This too is bad, as although the weak QBP is freed, White gets the QR file.

(3) Black can pursue waiting tactics. This is sound and he does so.

36 K–B2 K–K2
37 K–K3 K–Q2
38 B–K2 K–B2
39 P–Kt5 R–Kt1

Nothing in 39 ..., P–R3; 40 P–QR4, P×P; 41 RP×P! (not 41 BP×P, as this leads after 41 ..., K–Kt3 and 42 ..., K–R4 to a draw) and White occupies the QR file.

40 P–QR4 P–B3

If 40 ..., K–Kt3; 41 R–Q2. Probably it would be simplest of all for White to play 41 P–B4, but the continuation he chooses is perfectly sound.

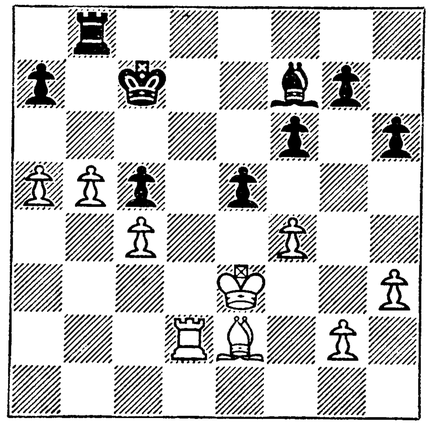
41 P–R5 P–K4

The Black Rook cannot abandon the QKt file because of the constant threat of P–Kt6 ch. Now, having posted his pawns to the best advantage, White improves the position of his pieces.

42 R–Q2 B–B2
43 P–KB4!

The only move, to realize White's superiority on the Q side. White's Bishop is now transferred to the KR1–QR8 diagonal. Meanwhile White threatens to win with B–Kt4.

Position after White's 43rd move



43 ... P×P ch

Otherwise 44 P–B5 follows.

44 K×P R–K1
45 B–B3

This is the point! The QBP is untouchable, as if 45 ..., B×P; 46 R–B2, B–Q6; 47 R×P ch, K–Kt1; 48 B–B6, R–Q1; 49 R–B1 White, winning back the pawn, has every reason to win the game. Now White transfers the Bishop to Q5, after which the Black QBP is hopelessly weak. Black's next move has as object the transfer of the Bishop to defend QKt2.

45 ... B–K3
46 B–B6

Black replies to 46 P–Kt6 ch with, of course, not 46 ..., P×P; 47 P–R6, B–B1; 48 P–R7, B–Kt2; 49 R–Q7 ch, K×R; 50 B×B, but 46 ..., K–Kt1 and White has nothing forced in prospect.

46 ... P–Kt4 ch
47 K–B3 R–KB1
48 B–Q5 R–Q1
49 K–K3 B–B1
50 R–R2 B–Kt2

51 R–Q2 R–K1 ch

It is easy to see that neither now nor earlier could Black exchange at his Q4, as after 51 ..., B×B; 52 R×B, R×R; 53 P×R, P–B4; 54 P–R6! his pawn endgame is hopeless.

No better is 51 ..., P–B4, and if 52 B×B, R×R; 53 K×R, K×B; to force the draw. In this case after 51 ..., P–B4 White follows the simple winning plan of: 52 R–Q3, R–K1 ch; 53 K–Q2, R–Q1; 54 P–R4, R–Q3; 55 K–B3, R–Q1; 56 P×P, P×P; 57 P–R6!, B–B1; 58 R–KR3, and wins.

52 K–B2 R–Q1
53 P–Kt4 B–B1
54 R–Q3 R–B1
55 R–K3 P–B4
56 P×P R×P ch
57 K–Kt2

An inexact move! As will be seen, he should have given preference to 57 K–Kt3.

57 ... B–Q2
58 P–Kt6 ch

Leads to winning a piece.

58 ... P×P
59 P–R6 K–Kt1

If 59 ..., B–B3; then 60 R–K7 ch, K–Q1; 61 R–KR7!, R×B; 62 P×R, B×P ch; 63 K–B2, K–B1; 64 R–R8 ch, and White comes out with an extra Rook.

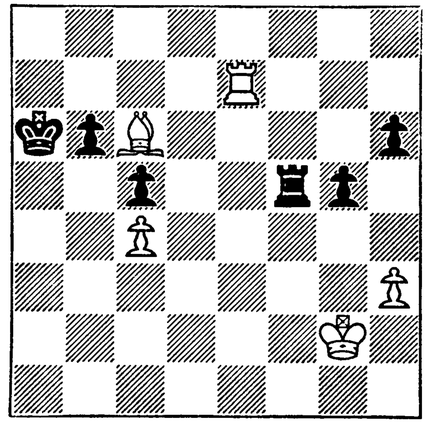
60 R–K7 K–R2
61 B–Kt7 B–B3 ch

Exactly! White wins only a minor piece, whereas with the King posted at Kt3 he would now win the Rook with 62 B–B8 dis. ch.

62 B×B dis. ch K×P

This is of course a won position for White, but it is not without technical difficulties.

Position after Black's 62nd move



White has two plans at his disposal: (1) To keep the Bishop on Kt5, to kill off Black's QKt and QB pawns, and (2) to give Black the possibility of advancing the QKtP (in certain lines) but to keep the Bishop in play. White prefers the second plan.

63 B–K4 R–B5
64 B–Q3 R–B3

Nothing in 64 ..., P–Kt5, as there follows 65 P–R4, R–B6; 66 B–Kt6!, P–R4; 67 R–R7, and White saves the RP.

65 B–K2 K–R4
66 K–Kt3 K–Kt5
67 R–K3 R–B5

Unquestionably lightens White's task. But even if 67 ..., K–R4; 68 K–Kt4, R–B5 ch; 69 K–R5, R–R5 ch; 70 K–Kt6, K–Kt5; 71 K–B6, R–B5 ch; 72 K–Kt7, R–R5; 73 K–Kt6, K–R4; 74 B–R5, R×BP; 75 K×RP, P–Kt4; 76 K×P, White should win.

68 R–K6 K–B6
69 R×KtP

69 R×RP could also be played.

69 ... R–K5

Greater difficulties would arise from 69 ..., R–R5; 70 R–B6, K–Q5; 71 R–Q6 ch, K–B6; 72

R–Q5, K–Kt5; 73 B–B1, R–B5; 74 K–Kt2, R–R5; 75 K–R2!, R–B5; 76 K–Kt1, R–R5; 77 K–Kt2, R–B5; 78 R–Q6, R–R5; 79 R–QB6, R–R4; 80 R–Kt6 ch, K–B6; 81 R–Kt5, K–Q5; 82 R–Kt3!, R–R5; 83 R–KB3, K–K4; 84 R–B8, and even so White wins.

No. 39. *Dutch Defence*

M. Yudovich (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–QB4	P–KB4
2 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
3 P–KKt3	P–K3
4 B–Kt2	B–K2
5 Kt–KB3	P–Q4
6 O–O	O–O
7 Kt–B3	P–B3
8 Q–B2	Q–K1
9 B–B4	

Chekhover's move: 9 B–Kt5! seems a stronger one.

9 ...	Q–R4
10 P–Kt3	QKt–Q2
11 QR–Q1	K–R1

A well-known variation of the Dutch Defence, in which the play is usually of a closed nature. In this variation Black tries with R–KKt1 and then P–KKt4 to seize the initiative as quickly as possible. However, this leads to a sharpening of the game, which shows that the system is not solid enough.

12 K–R1

A loss of tempo; in addition, at R1 the King is not so well placed as at Kt1.

12 ...	R–KKt1
13 P–K3	P–KKt4
14 B–B7!	

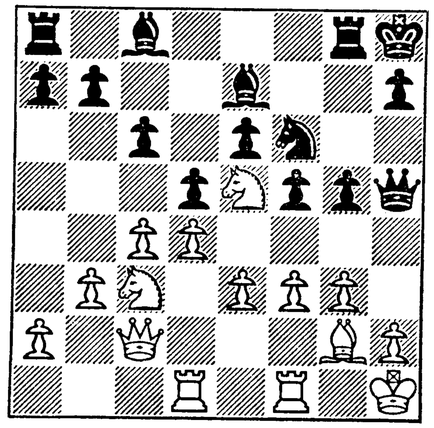
If at once 14 B–K5, then 14 ..., P–Kt5.

14 ...	Kt–K1

It is necessary to clear up the position, for White planned with 15 P×P to open the QB file.

15 B–K5 ch	Kt×B
16 Kt×Kt	Kt–B3
17 P–B3 !	

Position after White's 17th move



It would seem that Black was threatened with great danger, as with his next move, P–K4, White opens up the centre, after which his better development and advantage in space should play a decisive part. But it is just here that the insufficiently considered White 12 K–R1 has its effect, and Black finds a cunning variation with a pawn sacrifice, which gets him happily out of his main difficulties.

17 ...	B–Q3
18 P–K4	Kt–Q2

This is the whole point! White cannot play 19 Kt×Kt because of the intermediary move 19 ..., B×P. So he is forced to go in for a pawn

capture, which leads to a serious weakening of his position.

19 P–KKt4	Q–K1

Otherwise 20 Kt–B7 ch.

20 Kt×Kt	B×Kt
21 P–K5	B–Kt5
22 P×BP	KP×P
23 P×QP	B×Kt
24 P×P	

Very risky, as Black is fully compensated for the pawn by the more satisfactory disposition of his pieces ready for a direct attack on the White King, whose Castled position is upset. Simpler is 24 Q×B, P×P; with an approximately equal game.

24 ...	B×BP
25 Q×B	Q–K3
26 Q–Q2	B–Q4
27 R–B1	R–Kt2
28 R–QB2	P–B5

White's situation is serious. Black proceeds to prepare a decisive breakthrough.

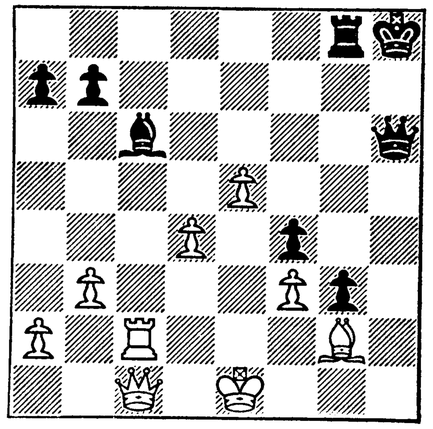
29 Q–B1	QR–KKt1
30 P–KR3 !	

A sharp-witted idea, which even so should not have saved White. Now, in order to break through at KKt5, Black is forced to expose his King, which gives White the possibility of counter-play.

30 ...	P–KR4
31 K–Kt1	P–Kt5
32 RP×P	P×P
33 K–B2	R–R2
34 R–R1	P–Kt6 ch
35 K–K1	R×R ch
36 B×R	Q–KR3
37 B–Kt2	B–B3

The last move before the time-check, and, as is often the case, inexact. Black should have played 37 ..., B–K3! and with the threat of B–B4 Black wins.

Position after Black's 37th move



As Black now threatens to play 38 ..., Q–R7; 39 K–B1, B–Kt4 ch; with his next move White defends Kt5.

38 P–QR4	B–Q2

Black decides on "wild" complications, as the result of which White could force a draw. Black should have admitted his inexact move at 37 and returned the Bishop to Q4. E.g. 38 ..., B–Q4; 39 R–B8, B×KtP; 40 R×R ch, B×R; 41 Q–B7, P–Kt3; 42 Q–Q8, Q–Kt3; still keeping the advantage.

39 P–Q5

The counter-attack on Black's King should have led to a draw.

39 ...	B–B4
40 R–B7	Q–R7
41 Q–Kt2	

Threatening a deadly discovered check.

41 ...	Q–Kt8 ch
42 B–B1	Q–K6 ch
43 B–K2	B–K3

No other defence possible. Of course the Bishop cannot be taken because of 44 ..., P–Kt7. But White again threatens mate.

44 Q–B2	R–Kt2

Or 44 ..., Q–Kt8 ch; 45 K–Q2, Q–R7; 46 P×B, P–Kt7; 47 Q–KB5!, P–Kt8(Q); 48 Q–B6 ch,

R–Kt2; 49 Q–B8 ch (but not 49 R×R because of 49 ..., Q–K6 ch), K–R2; 50 R×R ch, Q×R; 51 P–K7, Q×P(K5); 52 Q–B7 ch, K–R3; 53 Q–B8 ch, K–Kt4; 54 Q–Kt8 ch, K–R3; 55 Q–B8 ch, and despite his two Queens Black must reconcile himself to a draw.

45 P×B

A mistake that leads to defeat! A draw results from 45 R–B8 ch, B–Kt1; 46 Q–B5! and there is no defence against 47 R×B ch with perpetual check.

45 ... Q–B7 ch
46 K–Q2 Q–Q5 ch

Now White loses the checking square Q8, and the Black pawn can be queened.

47 K–K1 R×R

White resigns, as after 48 Q×R, P–Kt7; 49 Q–B8 ch, K–Kt2; 50 Q–B7 ch, K–R3 the Black King escapes from the check.

No. 40. *Queen's Gambit Declined*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*I. Kann* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	P–Q4
4 Kt–B3	B–K2
5 B–Kt5	QKt–Q2
6 P–K3	O–O
7 P–QR3	R–K1
8 R–B1	P–B3
9 B–B4	P–KR3

An incomprehensible move, to say the least. Black should have played simply 9 ..., P–QR3. Now White clearly outstrips Black in development. Later the weakening of Black's K side also has its effect.

10 B–Q3 P×P
11 B×BP P–R3
12 P–K4 P–QKt4
13 B–R2 B–Kt2
14 P–K5 Kt–Q4

14 ..., Kt–R4 is met by 15 B–K3, P–QB4; 16 O–O!, and the Knight at R4 is in a dangerous situation.

15 Kt×Kt KP×Kt

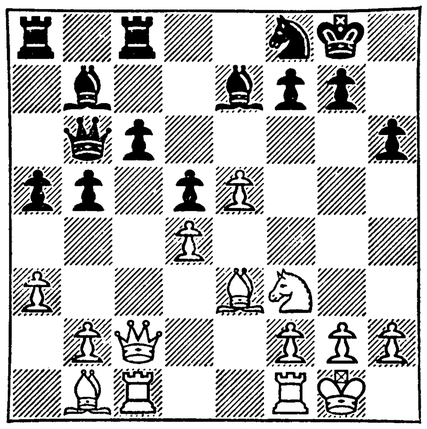
A positional error. Black now, firstly gets a backward pawn at QB3, secondly yields pawn superiority on the K side to White (the pawn at K5!) and most of all, is deprived of the possibility of exploiting the QB file for exchanges. In fact, after 15 ..., BP×Kt it would be much more difficult for White to organize an attack on the Black King.

16 B–Kt1

Drawing the Black Knight away from QB5.

16 ... Kt–B1
17 O–O Q–Kt3
18 Q–B2 KR–QB1
19 B–K3 P–QR4

Position after Black's 19th move



Black is completely helpless and undertakes a desperate attempt at counter-attack. White could reply simply 20 KR–Q1 (20 ..., P–Kt5; 21 P–R4), retaining all the advantages of the position. But he rightly assumes that the time has already arrived for decisive action, and so he takes no notice of Black's counter operations.

20 Q–KB5 P–QKt5
21 Q–Kt4

This is an unnecessary waste of time. He should have played 21 B×P! and 21 ..., P×B is out of the question because of 22 P–K6!, P×P; 23 Q–Kt4 ch, K–B2; 24 Q–R5 ch, K–Kt2; 25 Kt–K5, Q×P; 26 Q–B7 ch, K–R1; 27 B–R7!! and mate is inevitable.

After White's mistake Black succeeds in tying up the game on the Q side, and his pieces get freedom of action.

21 ... P–QB4
22 B–B5 R–B3

Perhaps 22 ..., R–B2 is preferable.

23 QP×P B×P
24 Kt–Q4

Or 24 R×B, R×R; 25 Q–Q4, B–B1.

24 ... P–R4!
25 Q–R4

Nothing in 25 Q–Q1, B×Kt; 26 R×R, Q×R; 27 B×B, P–Kt3! and 28 ..., Kt–K3.

25 ... Kt–Kt3
26 Q×P

White decides on a piece sacrifice, but this too proves inadequate for a win.

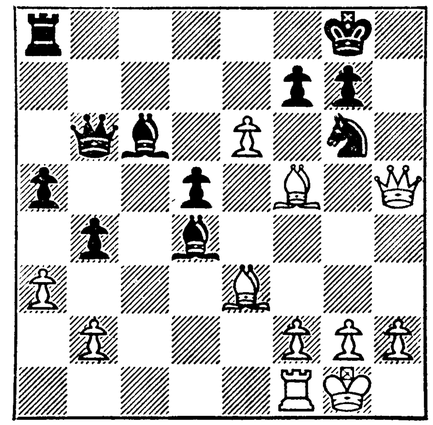
26 ... B×Kt
27 R×R B×R
28 P–K6 B–K1

White has brilliant play after 28 ..., B×B; 29 P×P ch, K–B1; 30 B×Kt, B–R3; 31 R–K1!! and there is no defence against 32 Q–B5! (31 ..., Q–Q1; 32 R–K8 ch, or 31 ..., Q–Q5; 32 Q–K2).

29 P×P ch B×P
30 B×B

Even so it would have been better to play 30 B×Kt, Q×B; 31 Q×Q, B×Q; 32 B×B, P×P!; 33 P×P, R–Kt1; although here too it is difficult for White to exploit his extra pawn.

Position after White's 28th move



30 ... Q×B
31 B×Kt B×B
32 Q×B Q×KtP
33 Q–K6 ch K–R1
34 Q×P R–QB1
35 Q–R5 ch K–Kt1
36 P×P P×P
37 Q–Q5 ch K–R1
38 Q–R5 ch K–Kt1
39 Q–Q5 ch K–R1
40 P–Kt4

The last attempt. 40 Q–Kt5, P–Kt6 also only leads to a draw.

40 ... R–B8
41 P–Kt5 R×R ch
42 K×R Q–Kt8 ch
43 K–K2 P–Kt6
44 Q–Q3 Q–R7 ch
45 K–B3 Q–B7

Not 45 ..., P–Kt7, after 46 P–Kt6, P–Kt8(Q); 47 Q–Q8 ch, Q–Kt1; 48 Q–R4 ch, leads to mate.

46 Q–Q7 K–R2
47 Q–R3 ch K–Kt3
48 Q–K6 ch K–R2

Drawn by agreement.

NINETEEN THIRTY-FIVE

ONE result of my two successful performances, in the match with Flohr and the tournament in which Euwe participated, was that I was invited to take part in the traditional Christmas tournament at Hastings.

I arrived in Hastings only two hours before the tournament began—a mistake which I have never committed again. At first I went down easily enough before Euwe and Thomas, and as the tournament was only of short duration this determined my failure. Certain people in the West tried to draw "profound" conclusions from this result, but these views could not have held the field for more than a month or two, i.e. down to the Second Moscow International Tournament.

There was very strong competition to be faced in this tournament: besides the finest Soviet masters, Lasker, Capablanca, Flohr, Spielmann and several other international masters took part in it. In the end the contest developed into a struggle between Flohr and me. Flohr was successful against the Soviet competitors, while I was successful against the foreign visitors (I lost twice to Soviet masters). In the end Flohr and I shared first and second prizes. The third was Emanuel Lasker, then 67 years old, half a point behind; he went right through the tournament without one defeat.

For my success in this tournament I was awarded the title of U.S.S.R. Grand Master.

In 1935 the youthful Soviet chess school finally won world recognition.

For combining chess so well with my post-graduate work as an engineer Gregory Konstantinovich Ordzonokidze[1] presented me with a car.

MOSCOW INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT

February

No. 41. *Caro-Kann Defence (by transposition)*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*R. Spielmann* (Black)
1 P–QB4	P–QB3
2 P–K4	P–Q4
3 KP×P	P×P
4 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
5 Kt–QB3	Kt–B3
6 B–Kt5	Q–Kt3

Recommended by the Czech master G. Reifir. I knew of 6 ..., Q–Kt3 before this game took place, and had had the opportunity to analyse the resulting position thoroughly.

I spent altogether twenty minutes in considering the whole game, and that only in order to check my home analysis. Reifir's move is unsatisfactory chiefly because instead of developing his pieces Black tries to launch an attack with Queen alone.

7 P×P Q×KtP

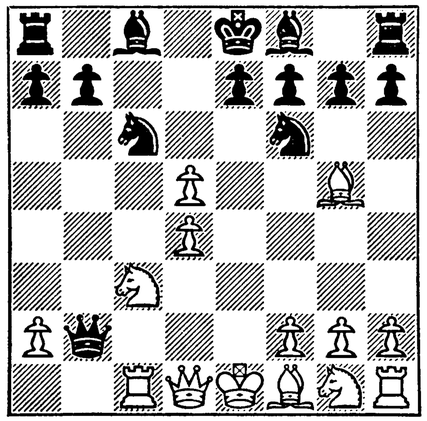
Also unsatisfactory are 7 ..., KKt×P; 8 Kt×Kt, Q–R4 ch; 9 Kt–B3, Q×B; 10 Kt–B3; and 7 ..., QKt×P; 8 KKt–K2!, Kt×Kt; 9 B×Kt.

8 R–B1

Black had not foreseen this reply. Probably Spielmann expected White to play to win a piece as in a variation previously published: 8 Kt–R4, Q–Kt5 ch; 9 B–Q2, Q×P; 10 P×Kt, Kt–K5; 11 B–K3, Q–Kt5 ch; 12 K–K2, P×P! but it is easy to see that White will be subjected to attack. Now the Black Knight at B3 has four ways of retreat, but, alas, they all lose:

(1) 8 ..., QKt–Kt1; 9 Kt–R4, Q–Kt5 ch; 10 B–Q2.

Position after White's 8th move



(2) 8 ..., QKt–R4; 9 Q–R4 ch.

(3) 8 ..., Kt–Q1; 9 B×Kt, KP×B; 10 B–Kt5 ch, B–Q2; 11 R–B2, Q–Kt5; 12 Q–K2 ch!, B–K2; 13 B×B ch, K×B; 14 Q–Kt4 ch, etc.

Thus he is left with only the fourth way of retreat:

8 ... QKt–Kt5
9 Kt–R4

The Black Queen is caught, and she can be saved only by sacrificing a piece.

9 ... Q×RP
10 B–QB4 B–Kt5
11 Kt–KB3 B×Kt
12 P×B

Black resigns. 12 ..., Q–R6 is followed by 13 R–B3, and he is forced to give up the Knight with 13 ..., Kt–B7 ch.

[1] Then Commissar for Heavy Industry.

No. 42. *Grünfeld Defence*

C. Capablanca (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–KKt3
3 Kt–QB3	P–Q4

In the Hastings Christmas tournament of 1934 Capablanca played unconvincingly against Flohr's Grünfeld Defence. So I too adopted the Grünfeld Defence against him.

4 Kt–B3

Unquestionably the system which gives White most initiative here is the one associated with Q–Kt3 (at the fourth or fifth move).

4 ... B–Kt2
5 P×P Kt×P
6 Q–Kt3

In this position Q–Kt3 is no danger to Black, as he develops strong pressure on the centre squares.

6 ... Kt×Kt
7 P×Kt P–QB4
8 P–K3 O–O
9 B–K2 Kt–Q2

Black plans to fianchetto the Queen's Bishop, but meanwhile he is subjected to a strong attack with P–QR4–5. The plan he has chosen is sound only in conjunction with Kt–B3, where it prevents P–QR5. So the play was correct in the Goglidze–Botvinnik game (No. 46 *infra*) which went: 9 ..., Q–B2; 10 O–O, P–Kt3; 11 P–QR4, Kt–B3. and Black has an excellent game.

10 O–O Q–B2
11 P–QR4

White has in mind after P–R5, B–R3 and KR–Kt1 to exert prolonged pressure on the Q side. To prevent this, Black agrees to the isolation of his QRP, hoping that his superior development and long-range Bishops are sufficient compensation.

11 ... P–Kt3
12 P–R5 P×RP
13 Q–R3 B–Kt2

14 Q×RP KR–B1
15 Q×Q

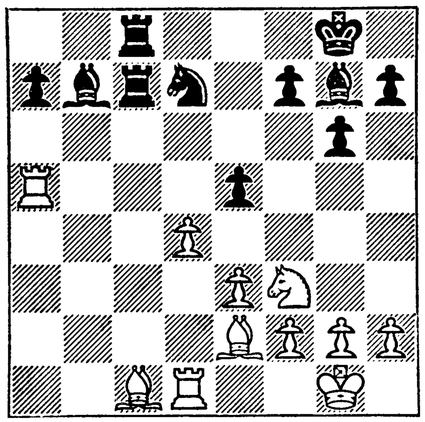
After any other move Black would still continue P–K4, attacking the White centre.

15 ... R×Q
16 R–R5 P–K4
17 R–Q1 BP×QP

An exactly calculated drawing manœuvre. In making this move Black had to foresee the closing position.

18 BP×P QR–QB1

Position after Black's 18th move



The entire manœuvre is based on the fact that the White QB has no good square to retire to. E.g.: 19 B–R3, B×Kt; 20 B×B, P×P; 21 P×P, B–B1!; 22 B–Kt2, Kt–Kt3; and Black, with 23 ..., Kt–B5 at his disposal, has at least an equal game.

19 R×RP!

A cunning trap: White counts on 19 ..., R×B; 20 R×B, R×R ch; 21 B×R, R–B8; 22 K–B1!, R×B ch; 23 K–K2 winning a pawn. However, Black has foreseen a different continuation.

19 ... B×Kt
20 R×R R×R
21 P×B

A draw is obvious also after 21 B×B, P×P; 22 P×P, B×P; 23 B–B4, B–K4; 24 R×Kt, B×B.

21 ... P×P
22 P×P B×P
23 B–KB4 B–K4
24 R×Kt B×B

Drawn.

If Black tried to play for a win, after 24 ..., R×R; 25 B×B, R–K2; 26 P–B4, P–B3; 27 B–B4 ch, K–Kt2; 28 B–Q6, R–Q2; 29 B–Kt8, R–Kt2; 30 B–Q6 the game would still be drawn.

No. 43. *Ruy Lopez*

P. Romanovsky (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K4
2 Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3 B–Kt5	P–QR3
4 B×Kt	

Formerly this exchange variation was played with the intention after 4 ..., QP×B; 5 Kt–B3, P–B3; 6 P–Q4, P×P; 7 Q×P, Q×Q; 8 Kt×Q of exploiting in the end-game pawn superiority (4 pawns to 3) on the K side. However, as time passed it transpired that Black's two Bishops offset this disadvantage.

In 1928 P. Romanovsky published an analysis in which he put forward the system of development now played in this game. White refrains from the Queen exchange and, later, according to circumstances, prepares a break through at KB4 or Q4.

4 ... QP×B
5 Kt–B3 P–B3
6 P–Q3 B–Q3
7 B–K3 P–QB4

To prevent 8 P–Q4.

8 Kt–K2

In order to play 9 Kt–Q2 and 10 P–KB4, also having in mind P–QB3 and P–Q4.

8 ... Kt–K2

9 Kt–Kt3

It transpires that it is not easy for White to prepare P–B4, as 9 Kt–Q2 is met by 9 ..., Kt–Kt3. If further 10 O–O, O–O; 11 Kt–QKt3, P–QKt3; 12 K–R1, Q–K2; 13 P–KB4 (as in the Tartakower–Alekhine game, Semmering, 1926), 13 ..., P–KB4!; 14 BP×P, Kt×P; 15 P×P, Kt–Kt5; and Black has the better game.

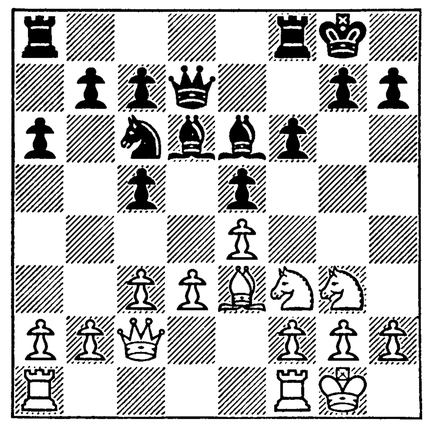
9 ... B–K3
10 P–B3 Q–Q2
11 O–O O–O
12 Q–B2

12 P–Q4, BP×P; 13 BP×P, P×P; 14 Kt×P at once is doubtful, because of 14 ..., B–QB5.

12 ... Kt–B3

Decisively preventing the break-through of P–Q4.

Position after Black's 12th move



A second system: 12 ..., Kt–Kt3; 13 Kt–Q2, Kt–B5; 14 B×Kt, P×B; 15 Kt–K2, P–B4; 16 P–B3, QR–K1; 17 P×P, B×P; 18 Kt–K4 leads to approximately the same variations as could arise later in the game itself (see moves 35–37). But probably, after 12 ..., Kt–Kt3 White's best is 13 P–Q4.

13 Kt–Q2 QR–Q1
14 QR–Q1 P–QKt3

If this is followed by 15 P–KB4, then 15 ..., P×P; 16 B×P, B×B; 17 R×B, Kt–K4!

15 P–B3 B–K2

Black had already planned the advance of the KBP, but he has to find the right moment. E.g. it is impossible to play straightforwardly 15 ..., Kt–K2; 16 KR–K1, P–B4; 17 P×P, Kt×P; 18 Kt×Kt, B×Kt; 19 Kt–K4, and Black's Bishops have only imperceptible superiority. Black should play P–KB4 only when White cannot exchange Knights at KB5 with advantage.

16 Kt–Kt3 P–QR4
17 Kt–B1 B–Q3

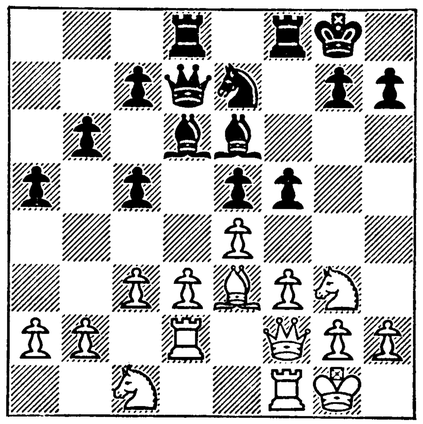
If now or on the previous move White played P–KB4, P–KB4! would follow to Black's clear advantage.

18 Q–B2 Kt–K2
19 R–Q2 P–KB4!

It is useful now to make certain deductions with regard to the opening system White has chosen. White's basic idea (the break-through at Q4 and KB4) has not been realized. In the future also White is continually forced to pursue waiting tactics.

Black has the initiative, but it is not easy for him to find a sound plan.

Position after Black's 19th move



Black's move 19 looks rather risky, as the KP is weakened and White gets K4. But in reality Black can avoid the weakness at his K4 (by transferring the Knight to KB5, where White will have to exchange

it) while the K4 square is far from Black's camp, and its occupation by White is more than offset by the opening of the KB file and Black's freer position.

20 P×P Kt×P
21 Kt–K4 P–R3
22 Q–K1 B–K2

Tactically unsound; it would have been better to keep the Bishop at Q3 and double the Rooks on the KB file, preparing a pawn attack on the K side. After the text move Black has to lose time defending his KP. Now White manœuvres skilfully, gradually intensifying the pressure on this pawn.

23 B–B2 B–Q4
24 Q–K2 KR–K1
25 R(Q)–Q1 Q–K3
26 KR–K1 B–B1

Of course 26 ..., B×RP is impossible, because of 27 P–QB4.

27 Q–B2 Q–B2

Black could continue 27 ..., P–B5; 28 P×P, B×P; eliminating the doubled pawn and undermining the Knight at K4. But in that case the exchange of major pieces on the Q file would predetermine a draw.

28 R–Q2 R–K3
29 QR–K2 R(Q)–K1
30 Q–R4

White still plays a waiting game, gradually posting his pieces in the most favourable manner for an attack on Black's KP.

30 ... Kt–K2

Black decides that to eliminate White's pressure on the KP he must transfer the Knight to KB5.

31 B–Kt3 B–B3
32 Q–B2 Kt–Q4
33 Kt–Kt3 P–KKt4

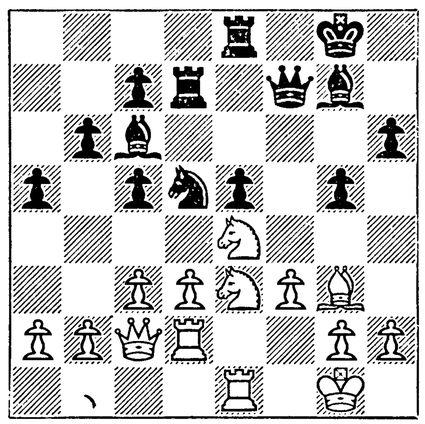
To defend the K4 pawn and to prepare for play on the K side.

34 Kt(Kt)–Q2 B–Kt2
35 Kt–KB1

35 Kt–QB4 is better. The Black KP is clearly weak, and Black would be forced to play 35 ..., Kt–B5. But then after 36 B×Kt, KP×B; 37 Kt–B2! (to exchange the Rooks) approximate equality is reached—a natural result after Black's inexact play at move 22.

35 ... R(3)–K2
36 R–Q2 R–Q2
37 Kt–K3

Position after White's 37th move



Carelessness. He should have played 37 P–QR3, after which, if he played soundly, the game would have been generally of the same nature as after 35 Kt–QB4 (see the preceding note). But now White loses a pawn.

37 ... Kt×Kt
38 R×Kt Q×RP
39 P–R4

The right move here is 39 P–QB4, P–R5!; 40 P–R4 (the Queen is not caught: 40 P–Q4, B×Kt; 41 P×B, R×P; 42 R×R, KP×R; 43 R–R3, P–Q6! leads to White's loss), P–R6; 14 KtP×P, Q×P; 42 P×P, P×P; 43 K–R2 (43 Kt×KtP, P–K5; 44 K–R2, B–Q5; 45 KR–K2, R–Kt2), Q–R1, and White can count on a draw.

39 ... P×P
40 P×B Q–B2

41 R(Q)–K2 R–KB1
42 B–Kt3 Q–Kt3!

Preventing 43 Kt–B2 and beginning the attack along the KKt file.

43 K–B2

Weak, as here the King occupies a highly insecure position. But even with the better move 43 R–B2, P–R4 (not, of course, 43 ..., B×Kt, because of 44 R×B!, Q×B; 45 R–KKt4); 44 B–R2, R(B)–Q1!; 45 R–KB1 (otherwise 45 ..., B–R3; 46 R–K1, R×QP; 47 B×P, B×Kt; 48 BP×B, B–K6!), P–B5!; 46 P×P, B–R3!; 47 R–K2, R–Q7! and Black wins.

43 ... P–R4

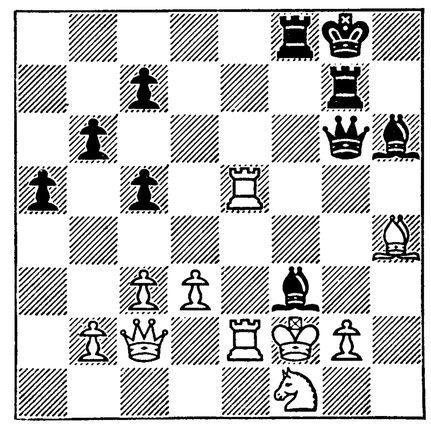
The beginning of the decisive attack.

44 Kt–Q2

To meet the threat of 44 ..., B–R3.

44 ... B–R3
45 R×P R–Kt2
46 Kt–B1 P–R5
47 B×P B×P!

Position after Black's 47th move



Leads swiftly to the goal. 48 P×B is followed by 48 ..., R×P ch; 49 K–K1 (or 49 K×R, Q–B2 ch; 50 B–B6, Q×B ch; 51 K–K4, R–Kt5 ch; 52 K–Q5, Q–Q3; mate), R×Kt ch; 50 K×R, Q–Kt8; mate.

48 K–Kt1 B×R
49 R×B

Or 49 Q×B, Q–Kt5 with exchange of Queens.

49 ... Q–R4
50 R–K4 R–B5
51 R×R B×R
52 Q–Kt3 ch K–R2
53 B–B2

53 B–B6 is followed by 53 ..., Q–B2!

53 ... Q–B6
54 P–Kt3 Q×P
55 Q–K6 B–R3
56 Q–R3 R–B2
57 Kt–K3

White's last hope is 57 ..., R×B; 58 Kt–Kt4! which, however, would not have saved the game, if only because of the counter-blow 58 ..., R–B8 ch!; 59 Q×R, Q×P ch; 60 Q–Kt2, Q×Q ch; 61 K×Q, B–B8; 62 P–Kt3, P–B5; 63 P×P, P–R5; 64 Kt–B6 ch, K–R1; 65 Kt–Q5, P–B4.

57 ... Q–Kt8 ch
58 Kt–B1 Q–B4
59 Q–R2 P–R5

Exchanges at KB2 are inevitable, followed by B–B8, and B×KtP.

White resigns.

No. 44. *Queen's Gambit Accepted*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*G. Levenfish* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 P–QB4	P×P
3 Kt–KB3	Kt–KB3
4 Q–R4 ch	

Bogoljubov continued thus in one of the games of his second match with Alekhine for the world championship. It is doubtful if the move is any stronger than 4 P–K3, but at that time it had the advantage of being a comparative innovation.

4 ... P—QB3

And this was Alekhine's defence in the same game. Here the more natural move (as Lasker played in his game with me during the same tournament) is 4 ..., QKt–Q2, followed by P–QB4, as in analogous variations of the Catalan Opening.

5 Q×BP B–B4
6 Kt–B3 QKt–Q2
7 P–KKt3 Kt–K5

Not a bad move. It is very useful to exchange off White's QKt, making it more difficult for him to prepare P–K4, while Black can play B–K5, forcing further exchanges.

8 B–Kt2 Kt–Q3

Inexpedient. The right move is 8 ..., Kt×Kt; 9 P×Kt, Kt–Kt3; 10 Q–Kt3, B–K5; 11 Kt–K5, B–Q4; 12 B×B, Q×B; 13 P–B3, with equal game.

9 Q–R4

This manœuvre seems rather strange, but it is necessary: if 9 Q–Kt3, Q–Kt3! White's Queen is driven just the same into 10 Q–Q1.

9 ... Kt–Kt3

Black must play very resourcefully, otherwise 10 Kt–R4 followed by P–K4.

10 Q–Q1 Q–B1
11 O–O

After 11 P–KR3 White would have great difficulty in Castling.

11 ... B–KR6

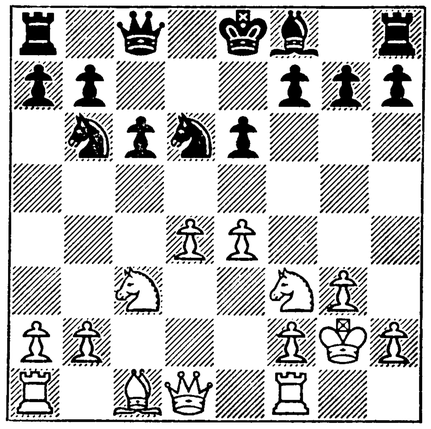
Black estimates the position unsoundly. 10 ..., Q–B1 could have an exceptionally prophylactic value: it would take the sting out of 11 Kt–R4, because Black would now have the reply: 11 ..., B–R6! In the given position there is no justification for linking up an attack on the White King with 10 ..., Q–B1 (in such cases it is often useful to exchange off the fianchettoed Bishop). The Queen's Bishop should have been kept as long as possible at B4, to delay White's P–K4. With the sound reply 11 ..., P–KKt3!; 12 R–K1, B–R6! (12 ..., B–Kt2; 13 P–K4, B–R6; 14 P–K5, B×B; 15 P×Kt, B×Kt; 16 R×P ch); 13 P–K4, B×B; 14 K×B, B–Kt2 Black retains chances of equal play.

12 P–K4 B×B

12 ..., P–Kt3 is bad because of 13 B×B, Q×B; 14 P–K5, Kt(Q3)–B1; 15 Kt–KKt5, Q–B4; 16 P–KKt4, Q–Q2; 17 Q–B3, P–K3; 18 Kt–K4, B–Kt2; 19 B–Kt5.

13 K×B P–K3

Position after Black's 13th move



Now Black gets into a difficult situation. It would have been better to play 13 ..., P–KKt3, and there would probably have followed 14 P–QR4, P–QR4; 15 B–Kt5, B–Kt2; 16 Q–B1 (White has every reason to make such a manœuvre, as he dominates the centre and is better developed).

14 P–Q5! B–K2

A crucial decision. If 14 ..., BP×P, then 15 P×P, B–K2; 16 B–B4, O–O; 17 P×P, Q–B3 (17 ..., Q×KP; 18 R–K1, and 19 R×B); 18 P×P ch, R×P; 19 K–Kt1. Black loses a pawn without adequate compensation; so he allows the formation of the defended passed pawn on Q6, hoping that his closed position will be difficult to break through.

15 P–K5 Kt–Kt4

Or 15 ..., Kt–B4; 16 P–Q6, B–Q1; 17 P–KKt4.

16 P–Q6

16 Kt×Kt, P×Kt; 17 P–Q6, B–Q1 is hardly stronger, as in this case the remaining Black Knight could be established excellently at Q4.

16 ... Kt×Kt

After 16 P–Q6, Kt×Kt is forced, as if 16 ..., B–Q1; 17 Kt–K4 the threat 18 P–QR4 would completely disorganize the Black forces.

17 P×Kt B–Q1
18 Q–Q4 P–QB4
19 Q–KKt4 R–KKt1

The only move. If 19 ..., O–O; then 20 B–R6, and if 19 ..., P–KKt3 White replies 20 Kt–Kt5 or 20 B–Kt5.

20 Q–K4

Nothing is gained by 20 B–Kt5, because of 20 ..., Q–B3; 21 B×B, R×B; 22 Q–KR4, K–Q2; 23 Q×RP (or 23 Q–K7 ch, K–B1; 24 Q×KBP, KR–B1; 25 Q×KP ch, R–Q2; 26 Q–KKt4, P–KR4; 27 Q×RP, QR–KB2; and White loses a piece), K–B1, and Black has a very promising game.

20 ... R–R1
21 B–K3

Still forestalling 21 ..., Q–B3.

21 ... Kt–Q2
22 Kt–Q2 P–KB4

22 ..., Q–B3 would be met by 23 Q×Q, P×Q; 24 Kt–B4, with a winning endgame.

23 Q–QR4

Not now 23 P×BP e.p. because of 23 ..., Kt×P; 24 Q–K5, Q–B3 ch; 25 K–Kt1, Q–Q4.

23 ... K–KB2
24 P–KB4 P–QR3
25 K–Kt1

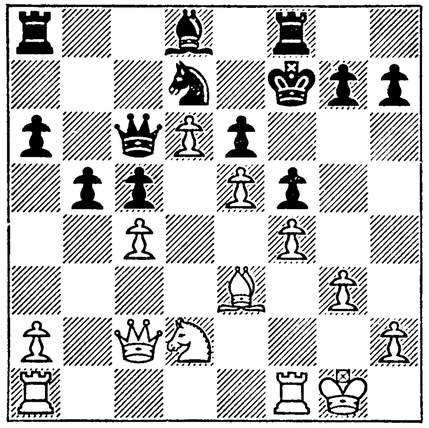
25 P–B4 leads only to an interchange of moves after 25 ..., P–QKt4; 26 Q–B2 (26 P×P, Q–Kt2 ch), Q–B3 ch; 27 K–Kt1, and then as in the text.

25 ... P–QKt4
26 Q–B2 Q–B3

26 ..., P–B5 would be met by 27 Kt–B3, B–Kt3; 28 Q–B2, B×B; 29 Q×B, Q–B4; 30 Kt–Q4, P–KR4; 31 P–QR4, and it is much easier for White to break through.

27 P–B4 R–KB1

Position after Black's 27th move



An interesting position has been reached. From the 14th move onward Black, in a dangerous position, has defended himself excellently, and now, because of the closed nature of the position, he is justified in counting on a draw. He should have tried to close the game on the Q side, while retaining the utmost mobility for his pieces, which is necessary in order to repel White's break-through on the K side. His right move here is: 27 ..., P–Kt5!; 28 P–QR4 (28 P–QR3, P–QR4; 29 RP×P, BP×P; or 29 ..., RP×P), P–QR4!

But now, with 28 P–QR4, P–Kt5; 29 P–R5 White could finally smother the black Bishop and work at once

to achieve a break-through on the K side.

28 Kt–Kt3 P–Kt5!

After 28 ..., B–Kt3; 29 P×P, P×P; 30 Kt–Q4, White wins a pawn.

29 P–QR3 P×P

Despite Black's shortcomings in the preceding phase, this is his first decisive blunder. Opening a file on the Q side leads to the loss of a pawn. He should have played 29 ..., P–QR4!; 30 P×P, RP×P; 31 R×R, Q×R; 32 Q–B2 (32 Kt×BP, B–Kt3; 33 Q–B2, Q–R2!), B–Kt3; 33 R–R1, Q–B3; and one cannot see how White can improve his position.

30 R×P P–QR4

Black has no defence against 31 R(KB)–R1 followed by 32 Q–B2.

31 Q–KKt2

No. 45. *Ruy Lopez*

N. Riumin (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K4
2 Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3 B–Kt5	P–QR3
4 B–R4	Kt–B3
5 O–O	B–K2
6 Q–K2	

The usual continuation is 6 R–K1. The text move is intended to combine P–B3 and P–Q4 with R–Q1, which intensifies the pressure on Black's KP.

6 ... P–QKt4
7 B–Kt3 P–Q3
8 P–QB3 O–O
9 P–Q4

White goes straight ahead with his plan, which is not justified by the position. Theory considers the sound move here to be 9 P–QR4! and Black still has several awkward opening problems.

9 ... B–Kt5
10 R–Q1 P×P

As is well known, the centre pawns are strongest when side by side, but in the given position this circumstance is not of great importance, as with the manœuvre that follows Black obtains control of the strong central squares.

11 P×P P–Q4!
12 P–K5

12 KP×P, Kt–Kt5; 13 Kt–B3 with equal play is worth considering.

12 ... Kt–K5
13 P–KR3 B–R4
14 P–QR4

This now is simply bad. White should have played to exchange the Knight at K5. But 14 Kt–B3, Kt×Kt; 15 P×Kt, Q–Q2 (or 15 ..., B–Kt3, associated with Kt–R4) gives Black rather the better game (as in Réti–Stoltz, Stockholm, 1928).

14 ... P–Kt5

The simplest! It forces an end-game which is hopeless for Black.

31 ... Q×Q ch
32 K×Q P–R5

32 ..., B–Kt3; 33 R(KB)–QR1 is not much better. But now the Queen's Bishop remains shut in.

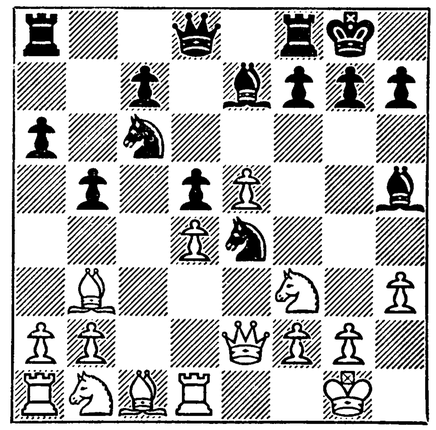
33 Kt×P Kt×Kt
34 B×Kt R–B1
35 B–B2 R×P
36 R(B1)–QR1

The pawn is lost just the same.

36 ... R–B7
37 R(1)–R2 R×R
38 R×R K–Kt3
39 R×P R–B2
40 R–R8 R–Q2
41 K–B3 K–B2
42 K–K2 Resigns

Black cannot prevent the White King's march to QB6.

Position after Black's 13th move



Very strong! Black has deprived White's Knight of QB3, and he cannot play 15 QKt–Q2, as the QP is left hanging. On the other hand White has an unsatisfactory game after 15 B–B2, P–KB4; 16 P×P e.p., R×P; 17 B×Kt, P×B; 18 Q×P, B×Kt; 19 P×B, Q–Q2!

Nor will White be able to defend the pawn with 15 B–K3, because of 15 ..., Kt–R4; 16 B–B2, P–KB4; and the K5 Knight is safely consolidated.

Finally, with 15 P–Kt4 White would not win a tempo, as Black would still not withdraw his King to R1, but would continue 15 ..., B–Kt3; 16 Kt–R2, Kt–R4!; 17 B–B2, P–KB4 with a still stronger position than in the text, as now the Q4 pawn is not under threat.

15 P–QR5

It is necessary to deprive the Knight of square QR4.

15 ... K–R1
16 P–Kt4

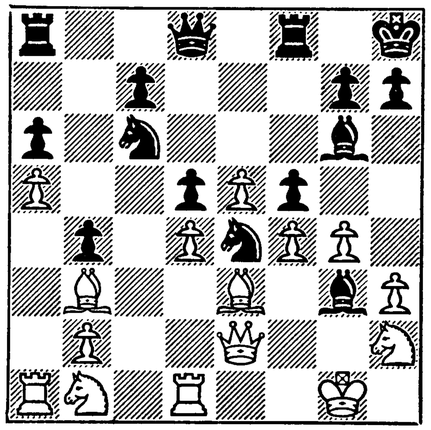
Understandably, this is not an attacking but a defensive move. Otherwise, with 16 ..., P–KB4 Black would obtain a decisive superiority in the centre and on the K side. However, 16 Q–B2 also would not bring any relief; it is met by the simple 16 ..., Kt–R2 (not 16 ..., Q–Q2; 17 B–R4) and White's pieces would become even more inchoate.

16 ... B–Kt3
17 Kt–R2 B–R5

Black is already contemplating B–Kt6.

18 B–K3 P–B4
19 P–B4 B–Kt6

Position after Black's 19th move



It was not easy to decide on this manœuvre; in the moves which follow the Bishop is more than once in danger, a circumstance which compelled Black to calculate the possibilities very exactly.

There is now a threat of 20 ..., P×P with an attack on the KBP; if White defends with his Rook, 20 R–KB1, then P×P; 21 P×P, B×P!!; 22 R×B, R×R; 23 B×R, Kt×QP; 24 Q–K3, P–B4; 25 Kt–KB3, Kt×B; 26 Q×Kt, Q–Q2; 27 Kt–R2, R–KB1; and Black wins without difficulty. That is why White is forced to play 20 P–Kt5.

20 P–Kt5 P–R3

Opening the KKt file for a decisive attack and for defence of the Bishop at Kt6, under cover of which Black will concentrate his forces.

21 P×P P×P
22 Kt–Q2 Kt–K2!

The most difficult moment in the game. To ensure a successful attack Black must post his Bishop at KR4.

This can be achieved only with the Queen's co-operation. But the Queen is burdened by defence of the QP; hence arises the necessity to defend the pawn with the Knight.

In addition, Black parries White's threat to exchange at K4, e.g.: 23 Kt×Kt, BP×Kt; 24 Kt–Kt4, Kt–B4; 25 Kt–B6, R×Kt; 26 P×R, P–B3! or 24 Q–Kt4, KR–Kt1; 25 Q×B (at White's Kt3), B–R4!; 26 Kt–Kt4, Kt–B4; 27 Q–B2, B×Kt; 28 P×B, R×P ch; 29 K–B1, R–Kt6, and there can be no doubt about the result.

23 K–R1 Q–K1
24 R–KKt1 B–R4
25 Kt(R2)–B3 R–KKt1
26 Kt–B1

White is forced to separate his Rooks, as if he attempts to intensify the attack on the Kt6 Bishop with 26 R–KKt2 it is met by 26 ..., B–B7! (with threat of 27 ..., Kt–Kt6 ch); 27 B×B, Kt×Kt.

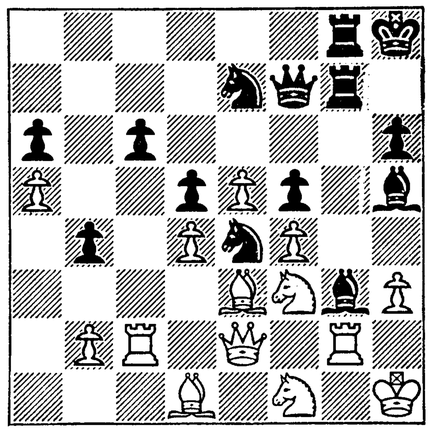
26 ... Q–B2
27 B–Q1 R–Kt2
28 R–B1 P–B3
29 R–B2 R(R)–KKt1

Both sides are in extreme time-trouble; this explains why neither now nor later does Black play P–QKt6! forcing the Rook to retreat. However, this does not affect the issue.

30 R–Kt2

White has no satisfactory defence against the threats of 30 ..., B×BP! and 30 ..., B–B7!

Position after White's 30th move



30 ... B×P
31 Q×P

Or 31 R×R, Q×R; 32 B×B, B×Kt ch; and 33 ..., Q–Kt8 mate. If 31 Q–Q3, then 31 ..., B×B; 32 Q×B (or Kt×B), P–B5; and White is in a hopeless position.

31 ... R×R
32 R×R R×R
33 K×R Q–Kt3 ch
34 K–R1 B×B
35 Kt×B Kt–B7 ch
36 K–R2 Kt×B
Resigns

This game was awarded a brilliancy prize.

No. 46. *Grünfeld Defence*

V. Goglidze (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–KKt3
3 Kt–QB3	P–Q4
4 Kt–B3	B–Kt2
5 P×P	Kt×P
6 Q–Kt3	

The Capablanca–Botvinnik game (No. 42 *supra*) developed in the same manner.

This system causes Black no difficulties whatever. White's threats on the Q side in connection with the open Kt file are repulsed easily.

6 ... Kt×Kt
7 P×Kt O–O

In the Capablanca–Botvinnik game Black played 7 ..., P–QB4! which is undoubtedly more exact, as

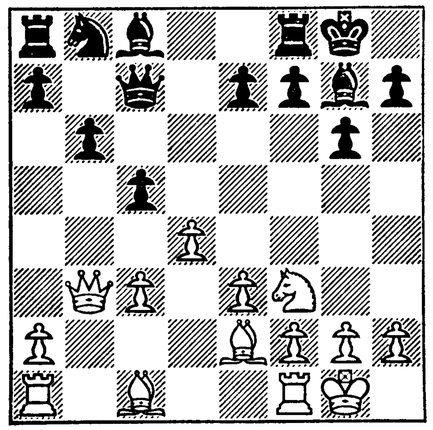
now White could hinder P–QB4 by 8 B–R3.

8 P–K3 P–QB4
9 B–K2

Here 9 B–R3 no longer has its former force, because of 9 ..., P×P; 10 BP×P, Kt–B3, and White has to take defensive measures against 11 ..., Q–R4 ch.

9 ... Q–B2
10 O–O P–Kt3

Position after Black's 10th move



This move fundamentally improves the whole variation in Black's favour. In the Capablanca–Botvinnik game Black played 10 ..., Kt–Q2, to which White replied 11 P–QR4! and obtained a prolonged initiative. But now, as the present game shows, a diversion with P–QR4 is entirely without force, as Black will be able to control his QR4. White should have continued 11 B–Kt2 and then P–QB4, to exchange off Black's fianchettoed Bishop.

11 P–QR4 Kt–B3
12 Q–R3 Kt–R4
13 Kt–Q2

White wants to drive the Knight off R4, and succeeds.

13 ... B–Kt2

Other possible continuations: 13 ..., P×P; 14 BP×P, P–K4; 15 Kt–B3! or 13 ..., B–K3; 14 B–Kt2, KR–Q1; 15 QR–B1, lead to approximately equal play.

14 Kt–Kt3 P×P
15 BP×P

The simplest. Inferior is 15 Kt×Kt, P–Q6!; 16 B×P, KtP×Kt; 17 B–Kt2, Q–B3; 18 P–K4!, KR–Q1; and Black would seize the initiative.

15 ... Kt–B5

Nothing would come of attempting to isolate White's QP, as after 15 ..., Kt×Kt; 16 Q×Kt, P–K4 White saves himself with 17 B–R3.

16 Q–Kt4 KR–B1
17 P–R5

Just in time. White frees himself from his one weakness, the QR4 pawn and, despite some backwardness in development, can fully count on a draw.

17 ... P–K4

With the obvious intention of increasing the activity of his King's Bishop.

18 RP×P

This move makes White's task much more difficult. The only correct course is immediate simplification: 18 B×Kt, Q×B; 19 Q×Q, R×Q; 20 RP×P, RP×P (20 ..., R–B6; 21 Kt–B5, RP×P; 22 B–Kt2! or 20 ..., R–Kt5; 21 Kt–B5, RP×P; 22 R×R ch; B×R; 23 Kt–Q3); 21 R×R ch, B×R; 22 P×P, B×P; 23 R–Q1, B–QB3; 24 Kt–Q4! with a probable draw. Now Black avoids exchanges.

18 ... Kt×KtP!
19 Kt–R5

White could avoid an isolated QP by playing: 19 B–Q2, Kt–Q4; 20 Q–R5, Kt–B6; 21 B×Kt (21 B–R6, B×B; 22 Q×B, QR–Kt1), Q×B; 22 Kt–B5, Q×Q; 23 R×Q, B–QB3; but then Black with his two

Bishops would retain some superiority.

19 Kt–B5 is no better, because of 19 ..., B–QB3; 20 B–Kt2, P×P; 21 B×P, B×B; 22 P×B, Kt–Q4; and 23 ..., Kt–B5.

19 ... B–Q4
20 B–Kt2

Leads to an almost forced lose. But even the better 20 B–R6, R–Q1; 21 B–Kt2 (or 21 Q–B5, Q–Q2; 22 B–Kt5, Q–K3), P×P; 22 B×P, B×B; 23 P×B, Q–KB5! (and possibly 24 ..., B×KtP) is also clearly in Black's favour.

20 ... B–B1
21 Q–Kt5

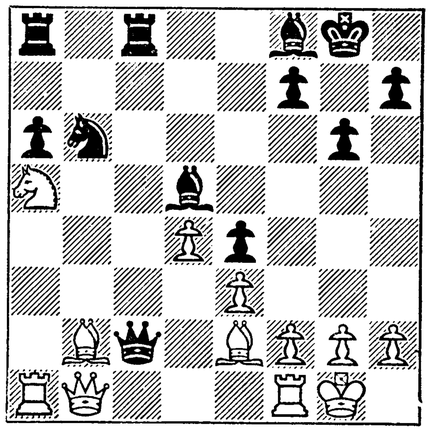
Or 21 Q–Q2 (21 Q–K1 also is met by 21 ..., Q–B7), Q–B7; 22 KR–Q1, Q×Q; 23 R×Q, B–Kt5; 24 R(Q7)–Q1, R–B7.

21 ... P–QR3
22 Q–Q3 P–K5
23 Q–Kt1

To 23 Q–Q1 the strongest reply would seem to be 23 ..., B–Kt5!; 24 R–B1 (forestalling 24 ..., Q–B7), Q–Q2 leaving Black in a dominating position.

23 ... Q–B7!

Position after Black's 23rd move



No salvation! If 24 B–Q1, Q×Q; 25 R×Q, Kt–B5; 26 Kt–Kt3 (26 Kt×Kt, B×Kt; 27 R–K1, B–Kt5), QR–QKt1 Black wins easily. The continuation White chooses allows Black to end the game brilliantly.

24 B–R3 B×B
25 R×B Q×B
26 Q×Kt QR–Kt1
27 Q–Q6 Q×R ch!
28 K×Q R–Kt8 ch

And mate next move.

NINETEEN THIRTY-SIX

In the spring of 1936 a chess event of the first importance took place in Moscow. This was the Third Moscow International Tournament, a double-round contest.

Capablanca was in brilliant form. After I lost to him at the very beginning (and lost unnecessarily! But for obvious blunders during the fifth hour of play this game would probably have been my best in the tournament) he kept the lead to the end.

My struggle with Capablanca for the first prize in this tournament made such a strong impression on some Soviet masters that before the Nottingham Tournament of August, the same year, where all the finest players of the world were gathered, Ilyin-Zhenevsky expressed the opinion that the most likely winners were Capablanca and myself.

He proved correct. True, at the beginning of the contest Capablanca went down to Flohr, and Euwe seemed to be my most dangerous rival. But after Euwe's defeat by Alekhine, Capablanca again went ahead, and he and I shared first place.

I should mention that I arrived in Nottingham ten days before the tournament began, and not two hours before, as at Hastings.

Nottingham marked the first success of a Soviet master outside his own country. In recognition of this success the Soviet Government awarded me the order of "The Badge of Honour."

INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT AT MOSCOW

May

No. 47. *Réti Opening*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*A. Lilienthal* (Black)
1 Kt–KB3	Kt–KB3
2 P–B4	P–QKt3
3 P–KKt3	B–Kt2
4 B–Kt2	P–B4
5 O–O	P–Kt3
6 P–Q4	P×P
7 Kt×P	

The attempt to avoid the Bishop exchange by playing 7 Q×P would lead to White's disadvantage because of 7 ..., Kt–B3; 8 Q–Q1, B–Kt2; 9 Kt–B3, Kt–QR4; and the QBP is noticeably weak.

7 ... B×B
8 K×B B–Kt2

Inexact, and creating difficulties for Black. The usual continuation 8 ..., Q–B1; 9 P–Kt3, Q–Kt2 ch; 10 P–KB3, P–Q4 gives him an approximately equal game.

9 Kt–B3 O–O

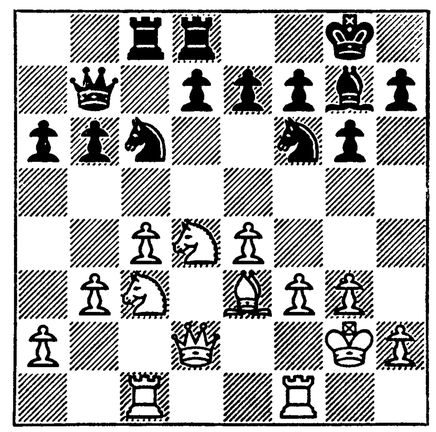
A second, even more serious piece of inexact play. He should still have played 9 ..., Q–B1 as the need to defend the QBP diverts White from operations in the centre.

10 P–K4 Kt–B3
11 B–K3 Q–B1

No better is 11 ..., Kt–KKt5; 12 Q×Kt, Kt×Kt; 13 QR–Q1.

12 P–Kt3 Q–Kt2
13 P–B3 KR–Q1
14 R–B1 QR–B1
15 Q–Q2 P–QR3

Position after Black's 15th move



White has achieved considerable positional superiority. Black is cramped and so is forced to attempt to break free. To this end he prepares to advance P–QKt4. The alternative plan, to free himself by P–Q4 would swiftly lead to disaster after 15 ..., P–K3; 16 KR–Q1, P–Q4; 17 BP×P, P×P; 18 Kt×Kt, R×Kt; 19 B–Kt5.

16 KR–Q1 Kt×Kt

Not at once 16 ..., P–QKt4 because of 17 P×P, Kt×Kt; 18 P×P, winning a pawn.

17 B×Kt P–Q3

Necessary, as the immediate 17 ..., P–QKt4 is followed by 18 P×P, P×P; 19 B×Kt, B×B; 20 Kt–Q5 (with threat of P–K5) and Black is left at least with a weak and isolated QP.

So Black first defends the KP, but in doing so gives White time to prevent P–QKt4.

18 P–QR4 Kt–K1
19 Kt–Q5 R–B3

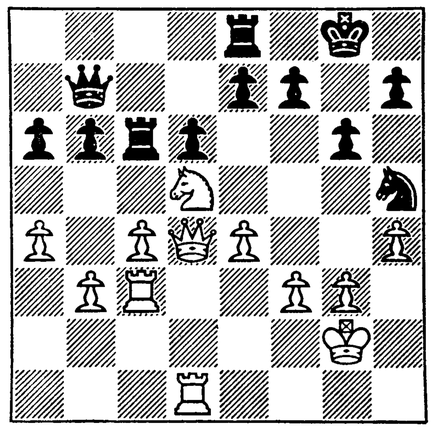
Defending the KtP. Not 19 ..., P–QKt4 because of 20 BP×P, P×P; 21 P–R5.

20 B×B Kt×B
21 P–R4

If Black plays 21 ..., P–KR4 it weakens the K side considerably. Nor can he transfer the Knight to the centre, for then White plays P–R5.

21 ... R–K1
22 R–B3 Kt–R4
23 Q–Q4

Position after White's 23rd move



23 ... P–QKt4

The attempt to get freedom only hastens the denouement: with a passive defence Black could still put up prolonged resistance, as it is not easy for White to organize an attack on the King. The game could go approximately as follows: 23 ..., Kt–B3; 24 R(Q1)–QB1 (preventing P–Kt4. Not good is 24 Kt×Kt ch, P×Kt; 25 Q×BP, P–Q4), Kt×Kt (nothing better in sight); 25 KP×Kt, R–B4; 26 P–QKt4, R–B2; 27 P–R5, and the attack swings over to the K side.

24 BP×P P×P
25 R(Q)–QB1 R×R
26 R×R P×P

Black has no defence against the Rook's irruption into his second rank.

27 R–B7 Q–Kt4
28 P×P!

The simplest. After 28 Kt×KP ch, R×Kt; 29 R×R, P×P; White still has to neutralize the passed pawn.

28 ... Q–K7 ch
29 Q–B2 Q×Q ch
30 K×Q P–K3

Not 30 ..., R–R1 because of 31 R–B8 ch, and 32 Kt×P ch. The endgame is won very easily. Black will have to surrender a piece for the passed pawn.

31 Kt–Kt6 Kt–B3
32 P–QR5 R–Kt1
33 R–B8 ch R×R
34 Kt×R Kt–K1
35 P–R6 Kt–B2
36 P–R7 Kt–R1
37 Kt×P K–B1
38 P–K5 K–K2
39 K–K3 P–B3
40 K–B4 P–R3
41 Kt–B8 ch K–B2
42 K–K4 K–Kt2
43 K–Q4 Kt–B2
44 K–B5 Resigns

This game was awarded the first brilliancy prize.

No. 48. *Nimzo-Indian Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White) — *I. Kann* (Black)

1 P–Q4 Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–K3
3 Kt–QB3 B–Kt5
4 Q–B2 Kt–B3
5 Kt–B3 O–O

Premature. Correct is 5 ..., P–Q3 at once.

6 B–Kt5 R–K1

It would be bad for Black now to play to win a pawn by 6 ..., P–KR3; e.g. 7 B–R4, P–KKt4; 8 B–Kt3, P–Kt5; 9 Kt–Q2, Kt×P; 10 Q–Q3, Kt–B4; 11 P–K4, and Black's K side is very weak.

7 P–K3

7 P–K4 might be followed by 7 ..., P–K4; 8 P–Q5, Kt–Q5; 9 Q–Q3, P–B4; and Black has control of his Q5.

7 ... P–Q3
8 B–K2 P–K4
9 O–O B×Kt

The Knight must be destroyed, or 10 Kt–Q5 will follow.

10 P×B P–KR3

The pin of the Knight restricts all Black's game, and to get rid of this pin he is forced to weaken his K side perceptibly.

A variation favourable to White follows 10 ..., B–Kt5; to which the reply would be: 11 Kt×KP, Kt×Kt; 12 P×Kt, B×B; 13 B×Kt, P×B; 14 Q×B, BP×P; 15 P–B5, and Black could not take the QBP because of 16 Q–Kt4 ch, K–R1; 17 R–Q1, and 18 R–Q7.

11 B–R4 Q–K2

It would be better to play at once 11 ..., P–KKt4; 12 B–Kt3, Kt–KR4; exchanging off the unpleasant Bishop at KKt3. Now White could avert this exchange by 12 P–KR3.

12 QR–K1 B–Q2

Another passive move! Here too he should have played 12 ..., P–KKt4 followed by Kt–KR4.

13 Kt–Q2

Preventing 13 ..., Kt–KR4 and also preparing 14 P–KB4, after which it will be very difficult for Black to get free of the pin.

13 ... P–KKt4
14 B–Kt3 K–Kt2
15 P–B4 P–K5
16 P–KR3

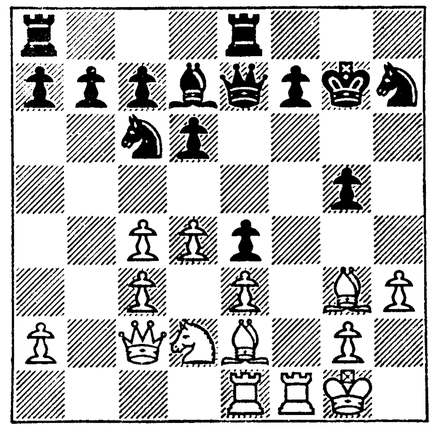
To prevent 16 ..., Kt–KKt5.

16 ... Kt–R2

16 ..., Kt–KKt1 should have been preferred. White cannot now play 17 Kt×KP because of 17 ..., B–B4, so a preliminary exchange of pawns is necessary.

17 BP×P P×P

Position after Black's 17th move



White has gained considerable positional superiority; however, it would have been far from simple to exploit it if Black had played 17 ..., Kt×KtP (18 P–KR4, Kt–R2; 19 Kt×P, Q×Kt; 20 B–Q3, Q–Kt5). Instead, Black loses a pawn with no compensation whatever.

18 Kt×P P–B4

Or 18 ..., Q×Kt; 19 B–Q3, Q–K2; 20 B×Kt.

19 Kt–Q2 Kt–B3

Bad is 19 . . ., Q×P ch; 20 B–B2, Q×B(K2) (20 . . ., Q–B5; 21 P–Kt3; or 20 . . ., Q–K2; 21 B–R5); 21 R×Q, R×R; 22 P–Q5, Kt–R4 (22 . . ., Kt–K4; 23 Q–Q1); 23 B–Q4 ch, K–Kt3; 24 P–Kt4, and there is no defence against 25 R×BP.

20 B–Q3 Kt–K5
21 B–R2 Kt–Q1

With an extra pawn and unceasing initiative White has every chance of winning.

22 P–B5 Kt–B2
23 P×P P×P
24 P–B4 QR–B1
25 Q–Kt2 Kt×Kt
26 Q×Kt Kt–R3
27 Q–Kt4 R–B3
28 Q×KtP R–Kt3
29 Q×P R(K)–QKt1
30 Q–R3

Simpler is 30 B×QP, Q×B; 31 P–B5, winning the exchange.

30 . . . P–Kt5

Black has improved the position of his pieces, but alas, at the cost of three pawns. The attempt to complicate the game when at such a material disadvantage cannot alter the outcome. White's win is only a question of time.

31 P–B5 R–Kt7
32 B×QP B–B3

This loses at once, but even after the relatively better reply 32 . . ., Q–Kt4 Black's attack is swiftly liquidated. E.g. 33 P–R4, Q×P; 34 B×R, R×B (34 . . ., P–Kt6; 35 B×P, Q×B; 36 Q×R, Kt–Kt5; 37 R–B2); 35 Q–R7, R–Q1 (35 . . ., P–Kt6; 36 Q×B ch, K–R1; 37 R×BP); 36 P–B6, P–Kt6; 37 R–B4.

33 P–Q5 B×P
34 P–K4 Q–Kt4

Threatening 35 . . ., R×P ch.

35 P–R4 Q×P
36 R–K3 R×RP

Black, in time-trouble, overlooks the loss of the Rook. But in any case his game is now hopeless.

37 Q–B3 ch K–R2
38 B×R P×P
39 B×P ch B×B
40 R×B Q–Q1

Black resigned without waiting for White's reply.

No. 49. *Alekhine's Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*S. Flohr* (Black)
1 P–K4	Kt–KB3
2 P–K5	Kt–Q4
3 P–Q4	P–Q3
4 Kt–KB3	B–Kt5
5 B–K2	P–QB3

Here theory recommends 5 . . ., Kt–QB3. Flohr, intentionally, avoids the well-known variations.

Later it was proved that 6 Kt–Kt5! ensures White the better game.

6 O–O P×P

These exchanges lead to a loss of two tempi for Black, after which White has an obviously superior position. The correct continuation here is 6 . . ., B×Kt; 7 B×B, P×P; 8 P×P, P–K3.

7 Kt×P B×B
8 Q×B Kt–Q2
9 P–KB4 P–K3
10 P–B4

The following piece sacrifice is unsound: 10 P–B5, Kt×Kt; 11 P×P, Kt–KKt3; 12 P×P double ch, K–Q2!

10 . . . Kt(Q4)–Kt3

11 B–K3 B–K2
12 Kt–QB3 O–O
13 R–B3

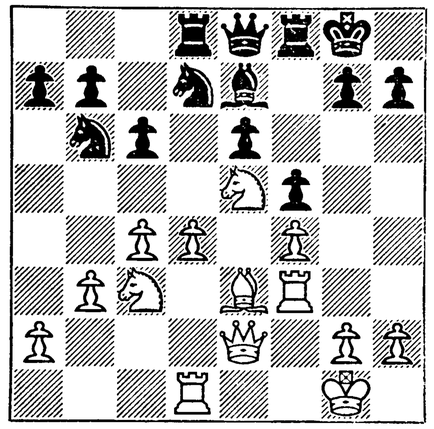
With the intention of continuing straightforwardly 14 R–R3 and then 15 Q–R5. This little demonstration on the K side is intended to force the Black Queen to occupy the not very favourable position at K1.

13 . . . Q–K1

To reply to 14 R–R3 with 14 . . ., P–KB4, preventing 15 Q–R5.

14 R–Q1 R–Q1
15 P–QKt3 P–KB4

Position after Black's 15th move



The weakness of the KP is not important, and now White's attack on the K side is no longer possible.

16 Kt–Q3

Avoiding simplifying exchanges. Now both sides manœuvre, to get the most advantageous position for their men.

16 . . . B–B3
17 B–B2 Q–B2
18 Kt–K1 KR–K1
19 R(B3)–Q3 Kt–KB1
20 Kt–B3 Q–B2
21 Kt–K5

Premature! Correct here is 21 P–Kt3.

21 . . . Kt(Kt3)–Q2

22 Q–Q2 B–K2
23 Kt–B3

White avoids the exchange, as it would give Black a little freedom. Nor is the time ripe for a breakthrough in the centre: 23 P–Q5, Kt×Kt; 24 P×Kt, Q×P; 25 B–Kt3, B–B4 ch; 26 K–R1, Q–B3; or 25 P–Q6, B×P; 26 R×B, R×R; 27 Q×R, Q×Kt.

23 . . . Kt–B3
24 Q–B1

It is necessary to forestall a possible 24 . . ., B–Kt5 followed by 25 . . ., Kt–K5.

24 . . . Kt–K5

More exact, even so, is 24 . . ., B–Kt5, to which White's best reply is 25 Kt–Kt1.

25 Kt–K5 Kt×B

Black's second Knight should try to get to his K5, so it would have been more to the point to exchange at White's B3. Now White can defend his K4 satisfactorily.

26 K×Kt Kt–Q2
27 Q–K3 Kt×Kt
28 BP×Kt Q–R4

Threatening 29 . . ., B–Kt5

29 P–QR4 R–Q2
30 P–Kt3 Q–Q1
31 K–Kt2 B–Kt4
32 Q–B3 Q–K2
33 P–B5

As the result of these prolonged manœuvres White has increased his positional superiority. While Black is condemned to passive defence, White can establish a Knight on Q6 or by advancing the QKtP can create real threats on the Q side. With his next move Black prevents the pawn advance, but he is impotent against the Knight transfer.

33 . . . P–QR4
34 Kt–Kt1 Q–B1

35 Kt–R3 B–Q1
36 Kt–B4 B–B2
37 Kt–Q6 R–Kt1
38 R–QKt1

White could have sacrificed a piece for three pawns: 38 Kt×KtP, R×Kt; 39 Q×BP, B–Kt1; 40 Q×P ch, and White's passed pawns should ensure his win.

38 ... Q–Q1
39 P–QKt4 P×P
40 R×P B×Kt
41 KP×B Q–R4
42 R(Q3)–Kt3 R–K1
43 Q–K2

Stronger than 43 R×KtP, R×R; 44 R×R, Q×RP; as Black's Queen would get some freedom.

43 ... Q–R1
44 R–K3 K–B2
45 Q–B4

Inexact! The King should first have been withdrawn from the KR1–QR8 diagonal, and then White could start decisive operations. Black exploits White's negligence, and finds an interesting tactical stroke.

45 ... P–QKt4!
46 Q–B2

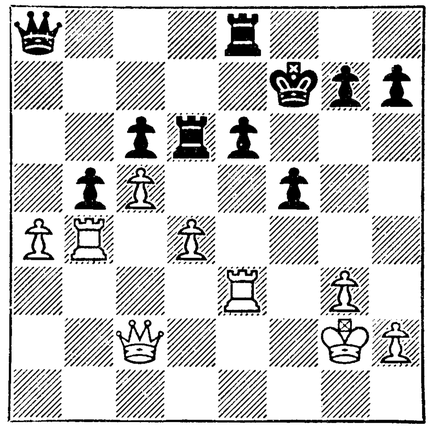
It was fortunate for White that there was a move retaining his superiority. Of course not 46 BP×P (e.p.), P–B4 dis. ch., nor 46 RP×P, P×P dis. ch.

46 ... R×P

Black's combination proves unsound, and he quickly loses. However, also after 46 ..., R–R2; 47 P×P, R–R7; 48 R–Kt2, P×P dis. ch; 49 K–R3 White's two passed pawns guarantee his win. 46 ..., P×P provided a more stubborn defence.

47 P×R P–B4 dis. ch
48 K–R3 P×R
49 Q–B7 ch K–Kt1
50 P–Q7 R–KB1
51 Q–Q6

Position after Black's 46th move



There is a second road to the win in the continuation: 51 R×KP, P–Kt4; 52 Q–Q6, with the irrefutable threat of 53 R–K7.

51 ... P–R3
52 Q×P ch K–R2
53 Q–K8 P–Kt6

As hopeless for Black is 53 ..., Q–R8; 54 R–K1, or 53 ..., Q–Q1; 54 Q×R, Q×Q; 55 R–K8, Q–B2; 56 P–Q8(Q), Q–R4 ch; 57 K–Kt2.

White now cannot play 54 Q×Q, R×Q; 55 R–K8, P–Kt7; 56 R×R, P–Kt8(Q); 57 P–Q8(Q), Q–B8 ch; with mate in two moves, but there is a possibility of forcing an easily won Rook endgame.

54 Q×Q R×Q
55 P×P R–Q1
56 R×P R×P
57 P–Kt6

Here the game was adjourned, but Black resigned without further play. There could follow: 57 ..., R–Kt2; 58 K–Kt2, K–Kt3; 59 K–B3, K–B3; 60 R–Kt5, K–K3; 61 K–K3, K–Q3; 62 K–Q3, K–B3; 63 K–B4, K–Q3 (the pawn endgame is hopeless for Black); 64 R–Q5 ch, K–B3; 65 R–B5 ch, K–Q3; 66 K–Kt5, and wins.

No. 50. *Sicilian Defence*

I. Kann (White) — *M. Botvinnik* (Black)

1 P–K4 P–QB4
2 Kt–KB3 P–Q3
3 P–Q4 P×P
4 Kt×P Kt–KB3
5 Kt–QB3 P–KKt3
6 B–K2 B–Kt2
7 B–K3 Kt–B3
8 Kt–Kt3

An idea deserving serious attention. White has in mind an immediate pawn attack on the K side, while Black has no better continuation than 8 ..., B–K3 and 9 ..., O–O, as otherwise White will Castle short, and then a well known variation unfavourable to Black will result.

8 ... B–K3
9 P–B4 O–O
10 P–Kt4 Kt–QR4

In reply to White's flank attack Black should have undertaken an active counter-attack in the centre, by 10 ..., P–Q4! (see Game No. 53, Alekhine–Botvinnik). Now White's attack grows dangerous.

11 P–Kt5 Kt–K1

This is unquestionably better than 11 ..., Kt–Q2, as afterwards the Knight can occupy Kt2, where it is useful for defence.

12 Q–Q2

White determines the Queen's position prematurely. The correct move is 12 B–Q4 at once, as Voltliss played against Eliskases (tournament at Podebrad, 1936).

12 ... R–B1

Sacrificing the QRP. White refuses the sacrifice, for after 13 ..., B–B5 it would lose several important tempi and relinquish the initiative to Black.

13 B–Q4 Kt–B5

Stronger is 13 ..., B–B5; e.g. 14 O–O–O (14 Kt×Kt, Q×Kt; and not 15 O–O–O because of 15 ..., B×B(Q4); 16 Q×B, B×B; 17 Kt×B, Q×RP) is followed by 14 ..., B×B(K2); 15 Kt×B (or 15 Q×B(Q2)), Kt–B5; and the Knight's strong position gives Black opportunities of counter-attack.

14 B×Kt R×B
15 O–O–O Q–Q2
16 Q–Q3 R–B1

After this passive move the initiative passes to White. Black should have continued 16 ..., P–Kt4 with an approximately equal game.

17 P–KR4 B–Kt5

Black must prevent the opening of the KR file.

18 R–Q2

Retreat to K1 would be more exact. The Rook's position on the same diagonal as the King provides Black with combinative possibilities.

18 ... P–Kt3
19 Kt–Q5

If 19 B×B, then 19 ..., Kt×B; 20 Kt–Q5, B–K3; 21 Kt–Q4, R–B4 and Black has fully equal play.

19 ... P–K4

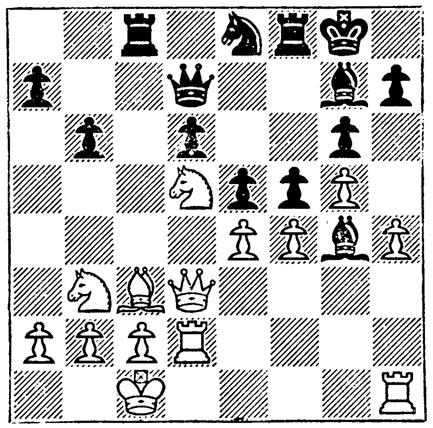
With passive play Black would be slowly asphyxiated after P–KB5.

20 B–B3

Apparently 20 P–B5 is also without danger to Black because of 20 ..., P×B (bad is 20 ..., P–B3; 21 R–Kt1, B–R4; 22 B–K3, and Black has nothing he can move); 21 P–B6, Kt×P; 22 Kt×Kt ch (22 P×Kt, B–KR3; 23 Kt–K7 ch, K–R1; 24 Kt×R, R×Kt is hardly any stronger), B×Kt; 23 P×B, Q–K3; 24 R–B2, K–R1.

20 ... P–B4

Position after Black's 20th move



An extremely sharp and complex position has arisen. To 21 BP×P Black can reply simply 21 ..., QP×P (22 Kt–B6 ch, Kt×Kt is not dangerous to him). Possibly strongest of all now for White is 21 KP×P, B×P; 22 Q–K2, and White preserves his Knight at Q5.

The continuation White chooses gives the advantage to Black.

21 P×P e.p. Kt×P
22 Kt×Kt ch R×Kt
23 Q–Q5 ch

Nothing in 23 P×P, R–B6; 24 Q–Q5 ch, B–K3; 25 Q×P, B–R3; 26 Kt–Q4, R–R6! and White does not get adequate compensation for the exchange.

23 ... R–B2

The move that decides the game! If now 24 Q×QP, then Q×Q; 25 R×Q, P×P; or 24 P×P, B–K3; 25 Q×P, B–R3, and White is in a bad way. Now White makes a pawn sacrifice which gives him nothing and only speeds up the loss.

24 P–KR5 P×RP
25 R–Kt1

In sacrificing the pawn White evidently overlooked that after 25 P×P, P×P; 26 Q×Q, B×Q; 27 R×RP, R–B8 ch; 28 R–Q1, R×R ch; 29 K×R, B–Kt5 ch he is a Rook down.

25 ... Q–B3
26 P×P P×P

The strong passed Rook-pawn secures Black the win. So there is no sense in complicating the game by winning the exchange at the price of laying bare his King's position.

27 Q×Q R×Q
28 R–Q5 R(3)–B3
29 Kt–Q2

The continuation 29 B×P leads to loss of material because of 29 ..., R–B8 ch; 30 R×R, R×R ch; 31 K–Q2, R–Q8 ch.

29 ... B–R3
30 P–Kt3 R–B7
31 K–Kt2

31 R×KP does not save the game, because of 31 ..., R–R7 (to defend the R4 pawn), followed by 32 ... R(B2)–B7.

31 ... R–K7
32 Kt–B4 R(B2)–B7
33 R–Q8 ch B–B1
34 P–Kt4

White's game is lost, but even so he should have chosen 34 R–B8; although here also the advance of the KRP is decisive.

34 ... R×P ch
35 K–Kt3 R–Kt7
36 R–KB1 R(B7)–B7
37 R×R R×R
38 Kt×KP B–K3 ch
39 K–R4 R×P ch
40 K–Kt5 R–QB7
41 R–Q3 P–R5
42 B–Q4 B–Kt2
43 R–QR3 P–R6
44 R×QRP P–R7
45 R–R8 ch B–QB1
46 R–R1 B–R6
47 Kt–B3 B×B
48 Kt×B R–B7
Resigns

NOTTINGHAM INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT

August

No. 51. *Queen's Indian Defence*

Bogoljubov (White) — *Botvinnik* (Black)

1 P–Q4 Kt–KB3
2 Kt–KB3 P–QKt3
3 P–K3

Here 3 P–KKt3 is admitted to be the strongest continuation. With the system White has chosen Black can easily equalize.

3 ... P–B4
4 P–B4 B–Kt2
5 Kt–B3

To the immediate 5 P–Q5 Black would reply with advantage: 5 ..., P–QKt4; 6 Kt–B3, P–Kt5; 7 Kt–K2, P–K3. Now White has prepared P–Q5, which forces Black to exchange in the centre. After the exchange the advance of White's QP will not have its previous force.

5 ... P×P
6 P×P P–K3
7 B–Q3 B–K2
8 O–O O–O
9 P–QKt3

Black threatened P–Q4 and P×BP, thus isolating the Q4 pawn; but if 9 Q–K2, P–Q4; 10 B–Kt5, White would have some compensation in the better disposition of his pieces.

Even so White vainly rejects 9 P–Q5!, while Black still has to overcome certain difficulties (e.g. not 9 ..., P×P; 10 P×P, Kt×P; 11 Kt×Kt, B×Kt; 12 B×RP ch).

9 ... P–Q4
10 B–K3

Here apparently 10 Q–K2, Kt–B3; 11 R–Q1 is better, so preventing Kt–K5. Now Black seizes the initiative.

10 ... Kt–K5
11 R–B1 Kt–Q2
12 Q–K2

White continues his development, but in two or three moves it will be clear that his game has reached a dead end. Very much to the point is the circumstance that 12 P×P is met by 12 ..., Kt×Kt!; 13 R×Kt, B×P, isolating the QP.

12 ... R–B1
13 KR–Q1

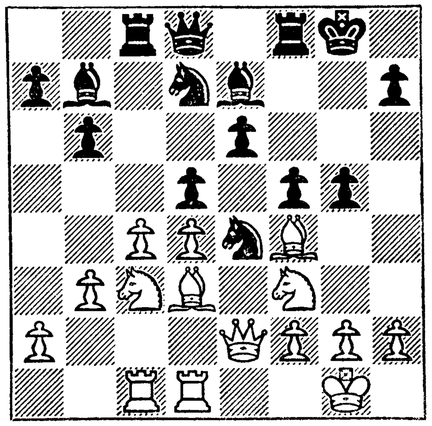
After 13 Kt–QKt5, P–QR3; 14 Kt–R7, R–B2; 15 B–B4, Kt–Q3; the position of the Knight at R7 is by no means enviable.

13 ... P–B4
14 B–B4

A decisive mistake! Bad too is 14 Kt–QKt5 (with the fundamental threat of 15 P×P), P–QR3; 15 Kt–R7, R–R1; 16 P×P, R×Kt; 17 P×P, Kt(Q)–KB3 and Black gets superiority in material; but with the modest 14 Kt–Kt1 followed by P×P and exchanges on the QB file White could relieve the tension a little.

14 ... P–KKt4!

Position after Black's 14th move



15 B–K5

Or: (1) 15 B–Kt3, B–Kt5! (bad is

15 ..., P–B5; 16 Kt×Kt, QP×Kt; 17 B×P, B×B; 18 Q×B, with more than adequate compensation for the piece); 16 Kt–Kt1, P–B5; (2) 15 B–Q2, P–Kt5; 16 Kt–K1, Kt×B!; 17 Q×P ch, K–R1; 18 R×Kt, B–Kt4 and White gets too little for the loss of the exchange.

15 ... P–Kt5
16 Kt–K1 Kt×B
17 B×Kt

17 P×Kt, Q–B2!; 18 B×Kt is only an interchange of moves.

17 ... QP×B
18 P×Kt Q–B2

The only move! If White succeeds in establishing his Knight at Q6 he will have the better position. However, with the capture of the pawn at K5, White is deprived of strong points in the centre.

19 Kt–Kt5 Q×KP
20 R–Q7 B–Kt4
21 R(B1)–Q1

Equivalent to surrender, but there is nothing better. 21 R×B, B×R; 22 Kt–Q3, Q–R8! and 21 Kt–Q3, Q–B3; and, finally, 21 R×B, B×R; 22 Q–Q1, B–R3; 23 Q–Q7, B–Kt2 all lose.

21 ... B–QB3
22 R×QRP

Otherwise Black would keep the pawn, and White would be condemned to slow destruction; the continuation White chooses loses at once, as Black captures the Q file.

22 ... QR–Q1
23 P–KR4

There is no defence.

23 ... R×R
24 Q×R R–Q1
25 Q–B2

Or 25 Q–K2, R–Q7; 26 Q–B1, P–K6.

25 ... B–Q7

White resigns, as he cannot simultaneously defend himself against 26 ..., P–K6 and 26 ..., Q–R8.

No. 52. *King's Indian Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White) — *S. Tartakower* (Black)

1 Kt–KB3 Kt–KB3
2 P–B4 P–Q3
3 P–Q4

Tartakower was fond of playing Philidor's Defence (especially against weak opponents). As the game proceeds we get fundamentally this defence, only White has made the unusual move P–QB4. But in this game his calculation proves unsound.

3 ... QKt–Q2

Black sets up a strong point in the centre—at K4.

4 P–KKt3

This system is undoubtedly the best, as the fianchettoed Bishop at Kt2 will be a reliable defence for the King.

4 ... P–K4
5 B–Kt2 B–K2

The popular modern continuation, 5 ..., P–KKt3 is stronger.

6 O–O O–O
7 Kt–B3 P–B3

The only way of developing the Queen's Bishop. After the Queen's transfer to B2 the Knight at Q2 will no longer be necessary for the defence of the KP, and can be moved to release Queen's Bishop.

No relief comes from 7 ..., P×P; 8 Kt×P, Kt–Kt3; 9 Q–Q3, P–Q4; 10 P×P, Kt×P; 11 Kt×Kt, Kt×Kt; 12 R–Q1; or simply 8 Q×P, and White commands much more space.

8 P–K4 Q–B2
9 P–KR3 R–K1
10 B–K3 Kt–B1
11 R–B1 P–KR3

An unsound plan. Normally in Philidor's Defence Black can attempt a K-side attack with pawns; but here this is out of place, as the Bishop at Kt2 defends the King excellently. Moreover, as the King is covered by this Bishop White can himself go over to the counter-attack, even at the cost of destroying the pawn screen of the Castled position.

12 P–Q5 B–Q2

If at once 12 ..., P–KKt4, then 13 P–KR4, Kt–Kt5; 14 RP×P, Kt×B; 15 P×Kt, RP×P; 16 Kt–R2, Kt–Kt3; 17 Q–R5, and Black's K side is hopelessly weak.

13 Kt–Q2 P–KKt4

Black needs to make only one move—Kt–Kt3, and his position will be excellent, as White cannot then play P–B4. But at this very moment White plays P–B4 and breaks through Black's K side, where it is very difficult for Black to organize defence.

The sound tactic is the waiting move 13 ..., Kt–Kt3; but in that case White plays 14 P–QKt4 and begins an attack on the Q side.

14 P–B4 KtP×P
15 KtP×P K–Kt2

If 15 ..., KP×P; 16 B×P. Black is threatened with 16 P–B5, which would lead to the loss of his R3 pawn. Even so this would be a better way out of the present situation, as now Black saves the pawn, but loses the game.

16 BP×P QP×P
17 P–B5

With the serious threat of P–Q6. Black cannot allow the passed QP, so he is forced to allow a White Knight on the central Q5.

17 ... P×P
18 Kt×P

Of course, not 18 KP×P, B×P.

18 ... Q–B3
19 Kt–B4 Kt–Kt3
20 Kt–Q6 B–K3

The Knight at Q6 is invulnerable. If 20 ..., B×Kt, then 21 R×Kt.

Black defends his KB2, because of a possible 21 Kt×B, Kt×Kt; 22 R×Kt, K×R; 23 Q–B3 ch.

To 20 ..., R–B1 White intended to continue as in the game. Here it was also possible to win the exchange, but it was still simpler to decide the game by a direct attack on the Black King.

21 Kt×B Kt×Kt

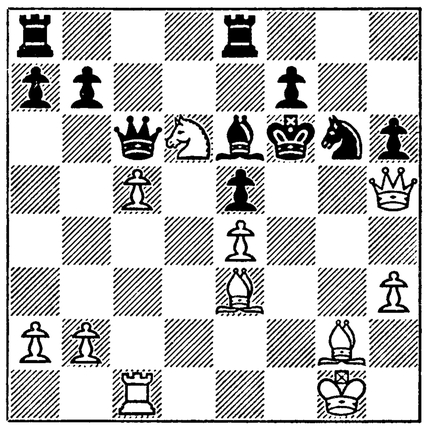
If 21 ..., R×Kt; 22 Kt–B5 ch, B×Kt; 23 P×B, and White wins the Knight.

22 R×Kt

An obvious sacrifice.

22 ... K×R
23 Q–R5 Kt–Kt3

Position after Black's 23rd move



The only way of freeing the King's road of retreat to the Q side, without giving up defence of the KBP. If the King succeeds in slipping away (e.g. after 24 Q×P, K–K2!) Black

will have chances of salvation. But how can White prevent the Black King from fleeing?

24 Kt–B5!!

This quiet move, which it was not easy to foresee, ends the struggle. The Knight at B5 is invulnerable; to 24 ..., B×Kt White replies 25 P×B, and Black loses his Knight. To 24 ..., R–R1 White replies 25 P–KR4, B×RP; 26 R–Q1, QR–Q1; 27 B–Kt5 ch, P×B; 28 Q×P ch, K–K3; 29 Kt–Kt2 mate. What follows now is obvious.

24 ...	R–KKt1
25 Q×P	B×P
26 R–Q1	QR–Q1
27 Q–Kt5 ch	K–K3
28 R×R	P–B3
29 R×R	Kt–B5
30 Q–Kt7	Resigns

This game was awarded the brilliancy prize in the Nottingham tournament.

No. 53. *Sicilian Defence*

Alekhine (White)	*Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–QB4
2 Kt–KB3	P–Q3

If Black intends to play the "dragon" variation, this is the order of moves he must choose. If 2 ..., Kt–QB3; 3 P–Q4, P×P; 4 Kt×P, Kt–B3; 5 Kt–B3, P–Q3; 6 B–Kt5 White prevents P–KKt3, as Rauzer pointed out.

3 P–Q4	P×P
4 Kt×P	Kt–KB3
5 Kt–B3	P–KKt3
6 B–K2	

A little later Rauzer introduced the strong 6 P–B3 into tournament practice. At the time of the Nottingham tournament this move was not yet known.

At this point I had a feeling that Alekhine had prepared some novelty in the vigorous variation which Kann had applied against me in Moscow (Game No. 50).

6 ...	B–KKt2
7 B–K3	Kt–B3
8 Kt–Kt3	B–K3
9 P–B4	O–O
10 P–Kt4	P–Q4

This counter-stroke in the centre (stronger than 10 ..., Kt–R4, as in the Botvinnik–Kann game) is absolutely correct from both the combinative and the positional aspect.

11 P–B5

If 11 P–K5, P–Q5; 12 Kt×QP (12 P×Kt, B×P), Kt×Kt; 13 B×Kt, Kt×KtP, White achieves nothing. (Levenfish–Botvinnik, Moscow, 1936.)

11 ...	B–B1
12 P×QP	Kt–Kt5
13 P–Q6	

This was Alekhine's novelty! If 13 P×KtP, RP×P; 14 B–B3, then 14 ..., B×P; 15 B×B, Kt×B; 16 Q×Kt, B×Kt ch; 17 P×B, Kt×BP ch; 18 K–B2, Kt×R; 19 R×Kt, Q×P; 20 R–Q1, Q–K4 and Black's position is rather the better.

Here Keres advised playing 13 B–B3, but it must be assumed that in this case Black has an adequate game in prospect (see, e.g. the Bondarevsky–Alatortsev game, Tbilisi, 1937).

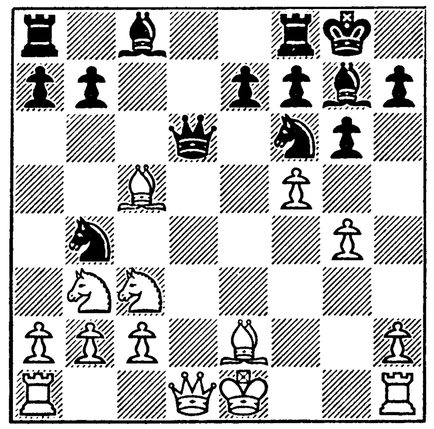
13 ...	Q×P

The only move. If 13 ..., P×QP; then 14 P–QR3, Kt–B3; 15 P–Kt5, and 16 P–B6.

Now White achieves nothing after 14 Q×Q, P×Q; 15 P–Kt5, Kt–Q4; but he finds a very strong move.

14 B–B5

Position after White's 14th move



How should Black play now? If 14 ..., Q×Q ch; 15 R×Q, Kt–B3 (15 ..., Kt×P ch; 16 K–Q2); 16 P–Kt5, Kt–Q2; 17 P–B6, B–R1; 18 Kt–Q5 his situation is not enviable. However, with a two-piece sacrifice Black gets perpetual check.

14 ...	Q–B5
15 KR–B1	Q×RP
16 B×Kt	Kt×P

Only thus! If 16 ..., Q–Kt6 ch; 17 R–B2, Kt×P; 18 Kt–K4! White has gained the tempo necessary to his defence. Also inadequate is 16 ..., B×P; 17 P×B, Q–R5 ch; 18 R–B2, Q×B; 19 B–Q3.

17 B×Kt	Q–Kt6 ch
18 R–B2	Q–Kt8 ch
19 R–B1	

Drawn, as White cannot decline the perpetual check.

No. 54. *Queen's Gambit Declined*

Botvinnik (White)	*Vidmar* (Black)
1 P–QB4	P–K3
2 Kt–KB3	P–Q4
3 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
4 Kt–B3	B–K2
5 B–Kt5	O–O
6 P–K3	QKt–Q2
7 B–Q3	

Over the usual 7 R–QB1 this move had only the advantage that it had been less studied. With his following manœuvre Black isolates the central White QP.

7 ...	P–B4!
8 O–O	

White is forced to accept the isolation of the QP, as if 8 BP×P, Kt×P, exchanges easing Black's defence are inevitable.

8 ...	P×QP
9 KP×P	

Of course, not 9 Kt×P, Kt–K4; followed by 10 ..., Kt×B. Now White has the isolated QP. But in the middle-game it greatly cramps Black; Black can best exploit its weakness in the endgame, but as it happens, the game doesn't get so far.

9 ...	P×P
10 B×P	Kt–Kt3

This manœuvre is not entirely sound. Better is 10 ..., P–QR3! and if 11 P–QR4, then 11 ..., Kt–Kt3; then White's Q side would be weakened.

11 B–Kt3	B–Q2
12 Q–Q3	Kt(Kt)–Q4

Black is afraid of phantoms. He feared that 12 ..., KKt–Q4 would be followed by 13 B–B2. But then Black could play 13 ..., P–KKt3 and because of the double threat 14 ..., B×B and 14 ..., Kt–Kt5 White achieves nothing. But if 12 ..., KKt–Q4; 13 B–K3, Kt×Kt; 14 P×Kt, B–QR5, or 12 ..., KKt–Q4; 13 Kt–K4, B–QR5, simplifications favourable to Black would be forced.

13 Kt–K5	B–B3
14 QR–Q1	

Black's situation is now not easy. 14 ..., Kt–R4 is followed by 15 Kt×B, P×Kt; 16 B–B1 with an excellent game. Probably the best of all is 14 ..., Q–R4; and if possible 15 ..., Kt×Kt; 16 P×Kt, B–R5. True, after 14 ..., Q–R4; 15 B–B1, Kt×Kt; 16 Kt×B, P×Kt; 17 P×Kt also White's game is to be preferred.

Black's next move loses time, and White strengthens his position still more.

14 ...	Kt–QKt5
15 Q–R3	B–Q4
16 Kt×B	Kt(Kt5)×Kt

Necessary is 16 ..., Kt(B3)×Kt; e.g. 16 ..., Kt(B)×Kt; 17 P–B4, P–B4!; and White's attack is repulsed, or 16 ..., Kt(B3)×Kt; 17 B–B1, R–B1 and still Black can breathe more easily. Evidently he had no suspicion how dangerous was his situation.

17 P–KB4

With the irresistible threat of P–B5. 17 ..., P–KKt3 is followed simply by 18 B–R6, R–K1; 19 B–R4, winning the exchange. The idea of White's manœuvre is that the natural move 17 ..., Kt–K5 (with the intention of 18 ..., B×B or 18 ..., P–B4) is followed by the sparkling 18 Kt×BP!!, R×Kt; 19 Q×KP, or 18 Kt×BP, K×Kt; 19 QR–K1!! and in either case White wins back the piece, while retaining his crushing positional superiority.

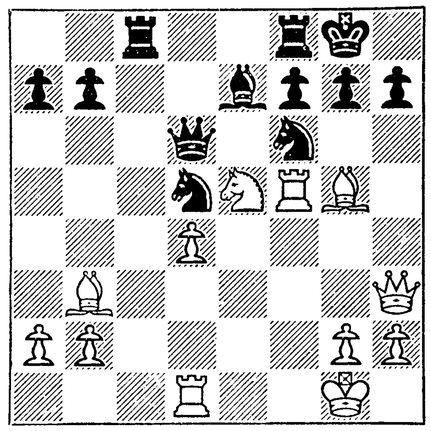
17 ...	R–B1
18 P–B5	P×P

Not much better is 18 ..., Q–Q3; 19 P×P, P×P (19 ..., Q×P; 20 Q–KB3); 20 KR–K1, and Black has difficulty in defending the K3 pawn.

19 R×P	Q–Q3

This loses out of hand. But even with the better 19 ..., R–B2; 20 QR–KB1 White's preponderance is obvious. Two fine variations were found by the master V. Panov.

Position after Black's 19th move



(1) 19 ..., R–B2; 20 QR–KB1, P–QR3; 21 Kt×P, R×Kt; 22 B(Kt3)×Kt, QKt×B; 23 R×R, B×B; 24 Q–K6!

(2) 19 ..., R–B2; 20 QR–KB1, Kt–Kt3; 21 Q–R4 (threatening to sacrifice both Rooks at KB6), Kt(Kt)–Q4; 22 Kt×P, R×Kt; 23 B(Kt3)×Kt, Kt×B; 24 R×R, B×B; 25 Q×B!!

In these variations also the Knight sacrifice plays the decisive role.

20 Kt×P	R×Kt

If 20 ..., K×Kt, then 21 B×Kt ch.

21 B(Kt5)×Kt	B×B

Or 21 ..., Kt×B; 22 R×Kt, B×R; 23 Q×R ch.

22 R×Kt	Q–B3

The last little trap: 23 R–B5 is met by 23 ..., B×P ch.

23 R–Q6	Q–K1
24 R–Q7	Resigns

This game was awarded a prize for the best game of the round.

NINETEEN THIRTY-EIGHT

After the Nottingham tournament I had a serious piece of work before me: the completion of my post-Graduate course at the Polytechnic Institute. Under Professor A. Goriev, I worked on my thesis for seven months; in June, 1937, I presented it to the Council of the Faculty of Electro-mechanics and was awarded my B.Sc.(tech.).

Of course my work on the thesis made it impossible for me to take part in the U.S.S.R. Tenth Championship, held at Tbilisi in 1937. In the autumn I played off a match with Levenfish, who had won the championship. I was in poor form, and some of the games were ruined by obvious blunders. The result was a draw, and Levenfish retained the title of Soviet Champion.

In the spring of 1938 I took part in the semi-finals of the U.S.S.R. Eleventh Championship, held in Leningrad. I played for the sake of training, and was not entirely unsuccessful.

In the autumn of 1938 I played in one of the most difficult tournaments I have ever known: the "Avro" International Tournament held at Amsterdam. The organizers were the Avro Wireless Company, and the eight finest players of the world came together as opponents. The tournament was organized on a strictly "business" basis. Before it began every competitor had to sign a document declaring that he had full confidence in the Organizing Committee on all questions relating to the manner in which the tournament was conducted.

The Organizing Committee did not justify so much confidence. We players were compelled to "travel round" all Holland, for the tournament was played off in ten towns. On days of play the competitors went without dinner. In such circumstances it is hardly surprising that the "old guard," Capablanca and Alekhine, were among the failures.

In the first round I was beaten by Reuben Fine, but then I took myself in hand, and in the course of ten rounds played three good games, against Reshevsky, Alekhine, and Capablanca, drawing right up to the leaders, Fine and Keres. However, I lost to Euwe (an inexcusable blunder in exchange); and a weak finish resulted in my taking third place.

Though in terms of formal success I did not do too well in this contest, it played a big part in giving me confidence in my own powers—never before had I succeeded in winning from both Alekhine and Capablanca!

U.S.S.R. CHAMPIONSHIP SEMI-FINALS, LENINGRAD

May

No. 55. *Grünfeld Defence*

A. Sokolsky (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–QB4	Kt–KB3
2 Kt–QB3	P–Q4

If Black wishes to turn the "English Opening" into the "Grünfeld Defence" this is most simply achieved by 2 ..., P–Q4.

3 P–Q4	P–KKt3
4 Kt–B3	B–Kt2
5 P–K3	

A quiet and reliable continuation; however, 5 Q–Kt3 is more energetic.

5 ...	O–O

6 B–K2 P–K3

This move (replying to 6 Q–Kt3) followed by the Knight manœuvre QKt–B3–K2 was introduced into tournament play by Alatortsev (Levenfish–Alatortsev, Leningrad, 1929). In the present game Black associates the move with the fianchetto of the Queen's-Bishop.

7 O–O P–Kt3
8 P×P

Probably premature; it gives Black a half-open K file with a strong point at K5, while White has no good squares for his pieces on the half-open B file.

Here it is sound to continue 8 Q–Kt3 (Flohr–Botvinnik, Leningrad, 1933, and Bronstein–Santasierre, Moscow–New York Match, 1945) with an approximately equal game.

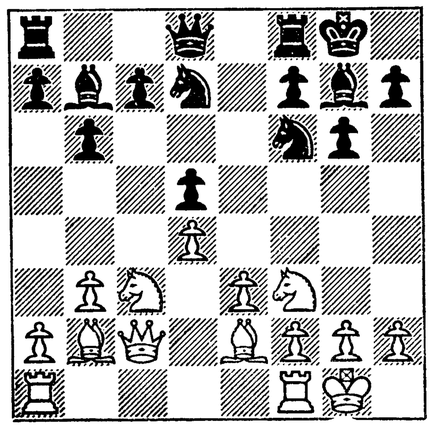
8 ... P×P
9 P–QKt3

A blunder, after which Black's position on the Q side becomes invulnerable. Now the White Queen is unable to occupy the squares on which she would be posted actively.

White should have played 9 Q–Kt3 followed by 10 B–Q2.

9 ... B–Kt2
10 B–Kt2 QKt–Q2
11 Q–B2

Position after White's 11th move



It is gradually becoming apparent that White has no plan of play whatever, and is occupied only with the "development" of his pieces. Perhaps this was sufficient fifty years ago, but in our day, when at the sixth to eighth move every master formulates his plan for the middlegame, there is no "better" way of getting a cramped and passive position than by aiming only at development.

Even now White could still occupy the central K5 with his Knight, which would lead to a struggle with double-edged possibilities. In a move or two this will prove impossible, and the control of the central squares will pass to Black.

11 ... P–QR3
12 QR–B1 R–B1
13 KR–Q1 Q–K2

It is not without interest to note that none of White's pieces can pass beyond the fourth rank.

14 Q–Kt1 KR–Q1
15 B–B1 P–B4
16 P×P

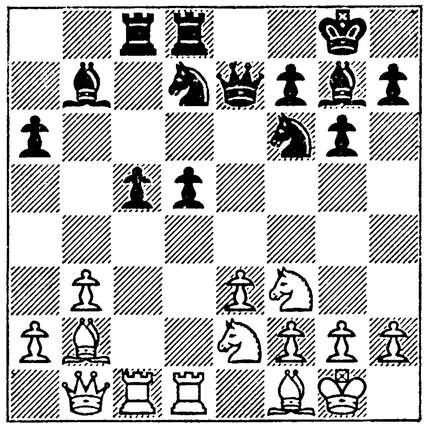
Another positional blunder. The weakness of the Black QB and Q pawns cannot be exploited merely by attacking them from the back rank when both sides still have the minor pieces on the board. Meanwhile White parts with his last stronghold in the centre, his Queen's pawn, which leads to livelier activity from the Black Bishop at QKt2, and the tempo of the "struggle" accelerates.

16 ... P×P
17 Kt–K2

White rightly decides that Black's main blow will be aimed against his K side, and brings up the Knight to defend his King; so 17 Kt–R4 would be worse.

17 ... B–R3!

Position after White's 17th move



The beginning of an attack which rapidly develops into all-out assault and leads to a won position for Black. The first blow is aimed against the badly defended KB2 square. En route Black avoids an exchange of the black-square Bishops which would ease White's situation somewhat. With his next move White averts Black's threat of 18 ..., P–Q5 but in doing so his Bishop retires from the QR1–KR8 diagonal, which quickly has its effect.

18 B–R3 Kt–Kt5

18 ..., P–Q5 would of course be met by 19 Kt×P.

A new danger now threatens White, namely: 19 ..., B×P; 20 P×B, Q×P ch; 21 K–R1, Kt–B7 ch; 22 K–Kt1, Kt–R6 dis. ch with a smothered mate, and there may also be a possibility of 19 ..., Kt×BP. In defending the KP with his Queen White gives Black yet another tempo for attack.

19 Q–Q3 Kt(Q2)–K4
20 Kt×Kt Q×Kt

Now the White Knight will defend his King, but in order to do so he must occupy a not very convenient position ..., at R1! Black exploits the lack of a Knight in the centre and advances the QP.

21 Kt–Kt3 Q–B3!
22 Kt–R1

White has no choice, for 22 R–B2 is followed by 22 ..., Q–R5; 23 P–R3, Kt×KP.

22 ... P–Q5!
23 Q–K2 Kt–K4

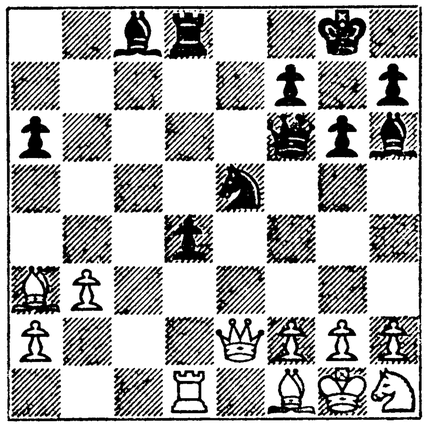
All Black's pieces are acting in harmony, and the menacing Bishops are especially good. How can White defend himself? 24 P–B4 is followed by 24 ..., Kt–Q2; 25 P×P (otherwise 25 ..., R–K1), B×BP; 26 R–B2, R–K1; bad also is 24 R×BP, R×R; 25 B×R, Kt–B6 ch; 26 P×Kt, B×P; 27 Q–B2, B×R; 28 Q×B, Q–Kt4 ch; and White has lost the exchange. Perhaps the best resistance follows 24 B×BP, B–B6; 25 Q×RP (25 P×B, P–Q6!; 26 R×P, Kt×R; 27 B–Q4, Kt×R), Q×Q; 26 B×Q, B×R; 27 B×R, R×B; 28 R×B, R×B; 29 P×P, R–Q4, though in this variation too, Black's extra piece assures him the win.

24 P×P P×P

Given the energetic support of all Black's pieces the passed Q pawn is quickly queened! Not 24 ..., B×R because of 25 P×Kt.

25 R×R B×R!

Position after Black's 25th move



The last difficult move of the game. After 25 ..., R×R; 26 B–Kt2,

White could still hold out. Unquestionably the Black Rook must be left at Q1, where it supports the passed QP; in addition Black wins an essential tempo, inasmuch as there is a threat of 26 ..., B–Kt5. White could resist rather longer if he now played 26 P–R3, P–Q6; 27 Q–K4, P–Q7; the text move hastens the denouement.

26 R–K1 P–Q6

Now all is clear, for a loss follows 27 Q×Kt, Q×Q; 28 R×Q, P–Q7; 29 B–K2, P–Q8(Q) ch; 30 B×Q, R×B ch.

27 Q–Q1 B–Kt5
28 Q–R1

Hopeless, too, is 28 P–B3, because of the obvious sacrifice 28 ..., Kt×P ch; 29 P×Kt, B×P; 30 Q–Kt1, P–Q7; 31 R–Q1, B–K6 ch.

28 ... P–Q7
29 R×Kt P–Q8(Q)
30 R–K8 ch R×R
31 Q×Q(B3) B–K7
32 Kt–Kt3 B–Kt2
33 Q–B6 B–Kt4
34 Q–B1 Q×Q
35 B×Q R–K8
36 B–K3 R–R8
37 P–QR4 B–Q6
38 P–B4 R–Kt8
39 K–B2 B×B
40 Kt×B R×P
Resigns

No. 56. *Nimzo-Indian Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White) — *V. Chekhover* (Black)

1 P–Q4 Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–K3
3 Kt–QB3 B–Kt5
4 Kt–B3

A continuation which has no serious difficulties for Black in the opening; but the opening is usually followed by the middle-game.

4 ... O–O

Here Lisitsin and Keres prefer 4 ..., P–QKt3.

5 B–Kt5 P–Q3
6 P–K3 Q–K2

In this variation it is not so easy for Black to release himself from the pin at KB3 (see Game No. 48). As he proceeds Chekhover improves Black's game somewhat, playing P–QB4, which increases the pressure on White's centre but simultaneously weakens the central Q4.

7 B–K2 P–K4
8 Q–B2

8 O–O could be followed by 8 ..., B×Kt; 9 P×B, P–KR3; 10 B–R4, P–KKt4; 11 B–Kt3, Kt–K5 and Black is completely free.

8 ... R–K1
9 O–O B×Kt
10 P×B P–KR3
11 B–R4 P–B4
12 QR–K1

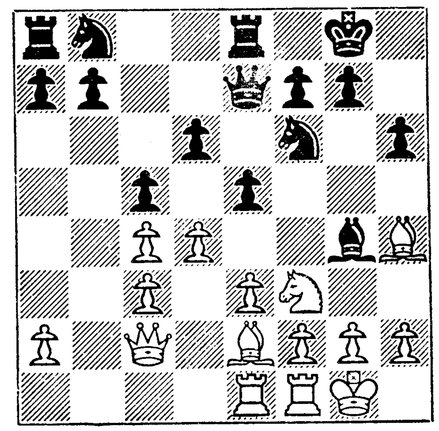
It is necessary to defend the Bishop before carrying out KKt–Q2 followed by P–B4. By the way, by mistake this game was originally published with the move 12 KR–K1, which is without sense, for White must aim at opening the KB file. It is interesting to note that not one commentator (and there were quite a few commentators on this game) drew attention to White's obvious "blunder" of 12 KR–K1, which was, fortunately, a blunder on the part of the reporter who transcribed the game.

12 ... B–Kt5

In the given situation this is playable, as White lacks the move 13 Kt×KP (see Game No. 48). Now the manœuvre 13 Kt–Q2 is also

impossible because of 13 ..., B×B; 14 R×B, KP×P; 15 BP×P, P×P; and so new ways have to be sought. It is quite natural that White should decide to centre play round the weak Q5 square, to do which he must exchange off the Black Knight at KB3.

Position after Black's 12th move



13 B×Kt Q×B
14 Q–K4 B×Kt

Black is taking the line of least resistance. During the game I was afraid of the continuation: 14 ..., B–B4; 15 Q×KtP, Kt–Q2; and White's pieces lose their cohesion.

But if 14 ..., B–B1; 15 Kt–Q2, Q–Q1 (15 ..., Kt–B3; 16 P–B4, B–B4; 17 KBP×P! This is where the Rook posted at KB1 comes in useful); 16 P×BP, P×BP; 17 R–Q1, White retains a slight advantage.

Now White has easy play and a clear plan, for by the Bishop exchange Black has weakened his central white squares.

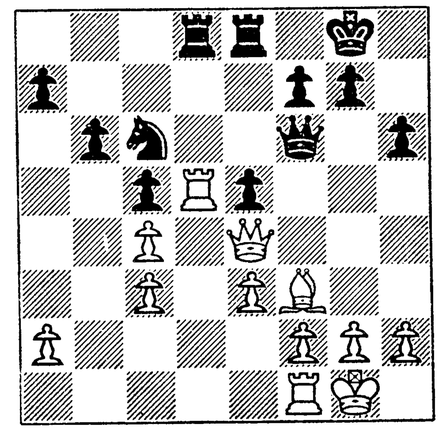
15 B×B Kt–B3
16 P×BP! P×P
17 R–Q1 QR–Q1
18 R–Q5 P–QKt3

Black's situation is difficult. Not, for instance, 18 ..., R×R; 19 P×R, Kt–K2 (19 ..., Kt–Q1; 20 Q–QR4); 20 P–Q6, Q×P; 21 Q×KtP, and his pawn chain on the Q side is shattered.

The continuation 18 ..., Q–K2; 19 KR–Q1, P–Kt3; is rather better than the text move. In this case White would retain his centralized Queen with 20 P–Kt4.

Chekhover's design was wily: he was aiming at a Rook exchange at Q4 and wanted to provoke White into obtaining a passed QP, which it would be possible to block.

Position after Black's 18th move



19 KR–Q1 Kt–R4
20 P–KR3 R×R
21 R×R

The exchanging off of one pair of Rooks does not improve Black's situation. Naturally, after 21 P×R, Q–Q3! (only not 21 ..., Kt–Kt2; 22 Q–R4!) Black's position would certainly be no worse.

21 ... Q–K2

No use 21 ..., R–Q1; 22 R×KP, and if 22 ..., Kt×P; then 23 R–K8 ch, R×R; 24 Q×R ch, K–R2; 25 Q–K4 ch, winning a piece.

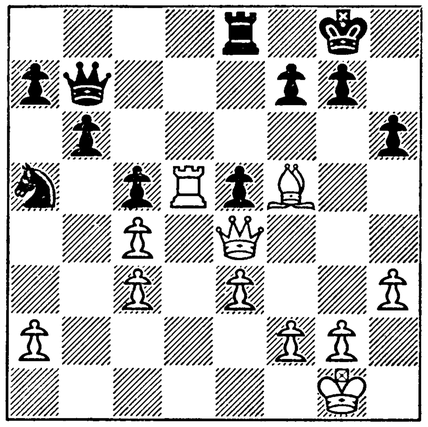
At the moment it may seem that Black has succeeded in putting up a satisfactory defence, but the following shrewd manœuvre with the Bishop dispels all illusions.

22 B–Kt4!

Threatening 23 R–Q7.

22 ... Q–Kt2
23 B–B5!!

Position after White's 23rd move



Essentially the decisive move. The White Queen is defended, and Black is unable to resist the Rook irruption into the seventh rank. Then Black will be forced into the Queen exchange (otherwise he risks being mated) and White has only to transfer the Bishop to Q5 to deprive Black's pieces finally of mobility.

If 23 ..., P–Kt3, White could continue either 24 R–Q7, or the more energetic 24 B×P, P×B; 25 Q×P ch, K–B1; 26 R–Q6!

23 ... Q–Kt1
24 R–Q7 R–Q1

Forced; otherwise 25 B–R7 ch, K–B1; 26 Q–Q5. Now the game is transposed to an endgame difficult for Black.

25 Q×KP Kt×P
26 Q×Q R×Q
27 B–K4!

Of course White should not be turned aside from his plan just for the sake of taking the QRP, especially as the variation 27 R×RP, Kt–Q3; 28 B–Q3, P–B5; 29 B–B1, Kt–Kt4; 30 R–R6, R–QB1 would suit Black perfectly.

27 ... Kt–R6

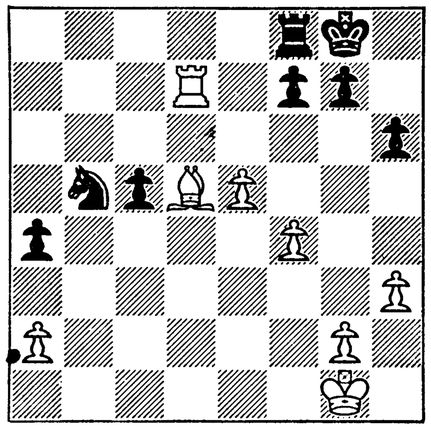
Black cannot hinder the KP's advance, and so he resorts to various tactical devices to maintain the balance in material somehow or other.

28 B–Q5 R–KB1
29 P–K4 P–QR4

Or 29 ..., P–B5; 30 R×RP, Kt–Kt4; 31 R–Kt7, Kt×BP; 32 B×P, Kt×KP; 33 R×KtP, and Black is a pawn down.

30 P–QB4 P–QKt4
31 P×P Kt×P
32 P–K5 P–R5
33 P–B4!

Position after White's 33rd move



When the game was finished Chekhover remarked that down to this point he still felt confident of a draw, but now he realized that his position was hopeless. If Black prevents the formation of a passed KP he loses the pawns on the Q side. In any case White can transfer the King to the centre.

33 ... Kt–Q5
34 K–B2 P–Kt4
35 P–Kt3 P×P
36 P×P Kt–K3
37 K–K3 P–B5

Desperation!

38 P–B5 Kt–B4
39 R–B7 Kt–Q6
40 P–K6 P×P

Here the game was adjourned. Black did not trouble to renew it when he learned that White had sealed the move 41 P×P (41 ..., R–K1; 42 P–K7 dis. ch, K–Kt2; 43 B–B6).

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November

No. 57. *English Opening*

M. Botvinnik (White) — *S. Reshevsky* (Black)

1 P–QB4 P–K4
2 Kt–QB3 Kt–QB3

The result is the close Variation of the Sicilian Defence with colours reversed. In the Sicilian Defence this variation leads to complicated play; here his possession of an extra tempo should lead to a definite advantage for White.

3 P–KKt3 P–KKt3
4 B–Kt2 B–Kt2
5 P–K3

Of course it is more convenient to develop the KKt to K2; in view of the possible Black P–KB4 the Knight would be badly placed at KB3.

5 ... P–Q3
6 KKt–K2 KKt–K2
7 P–Q4 P×P

Not a bad plan. Although Black relinquishes his pawn centre he plans to get compensation by exerting pressure with his pieces.

8 P×P O–O
9 O–O Kt–B4

The dogmatic rule that a Bishop is superior to a Knight is so widespread that Reshevsky would not play the variation 9 ..., B–Kt5; 10 P–KR3, B×Kt; 11 Kt×B, Kt–B4; 12 P–Q5, Kt–K4; 13 Q–B2, R–K1; in which Black's task of equalizing would be simplified. Even so, in this game Black failed to solve the problem of developing his Queen's Bishop.

10 P–Q5 Kt–K4
11 P–Kt3 P–QR4

A stereotyped plan. Black aims to secure QB4 for his Knight, but that proves impracticable, as White will play P–QKt4.

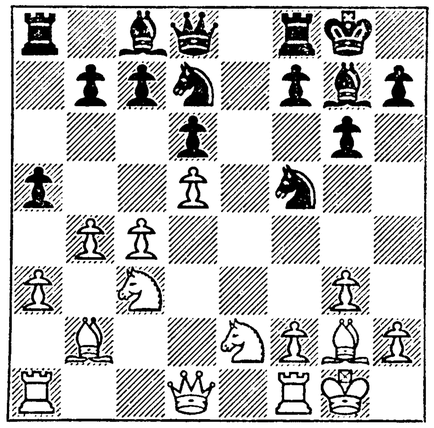
There was more initiative in 11 ..., P–QR3; 12 B–Kt2, P–QKt4; 13 P×P, P×P; 14 Q–B2, P–Kt5; 15 Kt–K4, B–QR3, with counterplay. But of course it is easier to find this plan in home analysis, after the game is finished, than at the board.

12 B–Kt2 Kt–Q2
13 P–QR3 Kt–B4

All this takes time, and so Black cannot exploit the weakening of White's pawns on the Q side.

14 P–QKt4 Kt–Q2

Position after Black's 14th move



It was attractive to try 14 ..., P×P; 15 P×P, R×R; 16 B×R, Kt–QR3; attacking the QKtP. But the withdrawal of the Knight from defence of KB3 leads to 17 Kt–K4!, Kt×QKtP; 18 P–Kt4!, Kt–R3 (or 18 ..., Kt–K2; 19 B×B, K×B; 20 Q–R1 ch, P–B3; 21 Kt×P); 19 B×B (19 P–Kt5, B×B; 20 Q×B, Kt–Kt5; 21 P–R3, P–KB4), K×B; 20 Q–Q4 ch, P–B3; 21 P–Kt5, Kt–Kt1; 22 Kt(2)–Kt3 and White has a dangerous initiative.

15 Q–Kt3 Kt–Q5

A serious blunder on Black's part,

after which White's superiority is apparent. Of course, the better continuation is 15 ..., P×P; 16 P×P, R×R; 17 R×R, achieving simplification, though, truly, at the cost of loss of the QR file.

16 Kt×Kt B×Kt
17 QR–Q1

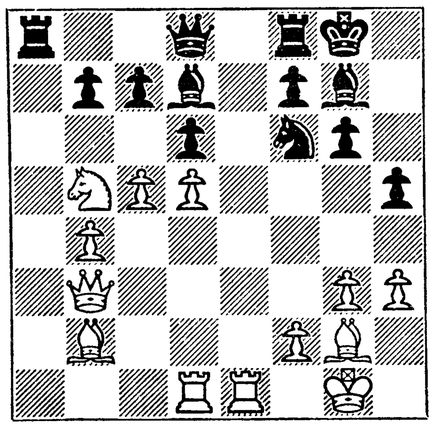
A quite timely avoidance of the Rook exchange on the QR file, for Black's Rooks will be separated for some time by the awkward position of his Queen's Bishop. White is guaranteed possession of the K file; and the Rook at Q1 will prove very useful.

17 ... B–Kt2
18 KR–K1 P×P
19 P×P Kt–B3
20 P–R3

With one move depriving the Black Queen's Bishop of two squares for its development: 20 ..., B–B4 can be met by 21 P–Kt4. With his next move Black temporarily secures B4 for the Bishop, but the manœuvre Kt–Kt5–Q4 leads to its retreat, and Q7 will be under fire after P–QB5–B6. It is not surprising that in the end the Bishop will be forced to return to B1!

20 ... P–R4
21 P–B5 B–B4
22 Kt–Kt5 B–Q2

Position after Black's 22nd move



The Bishop tosses about the board in search of a haven. Yet perhaps it was not too late to play 22 ..., P–Kt4, securing the KR2–Kt8 diagonal for it. Evidently Reshevsky could not bring himself to make such a "desperate" move.

23 P–B6 P×P

After this White's win is only a question of time. After the exchange of his QP for Black's KtP both White's King's Bishop and his Rook at Q1 will become active, which is of decisive importance. 23 ..., B–B1 is more logical.

24 P×P B–B1

If 24 ..., B–K3; 25 R×B, P×R; 26 Kt–Q4, Q–K2; 27 Kt×KP, Q–B2; 28 B×Kt, B×B (28 ..., Q×B; 29 Kt×R dis. ch, K×Kt; 30 R–Q3); 29 B–Q5, K–R1; 30 Kt–B4, Q–Kt2; 31 Q–Q3 and White wins.

25 Kt×QP

The natural consequence of Black's mistake at the 23rd move. White has a won position, of course, but I decided on this move only after much vacillation, as the variation: 25 ..., P×Kt; 26 P–B7, Q×P; 27 B×R, B×P; gives Black some counter-chances. However, after 28 B–R1, the passed QKtP should decide the outcome.

25 ... B–K3

Reshevsky is in great time-trouble, and he makes a useless move, as White could reply simply: 26 Kt–B4. Taking his opponent's time difficulty into account, White prefers to go in for complications.

26 R×B P×R
27 Kt–B5

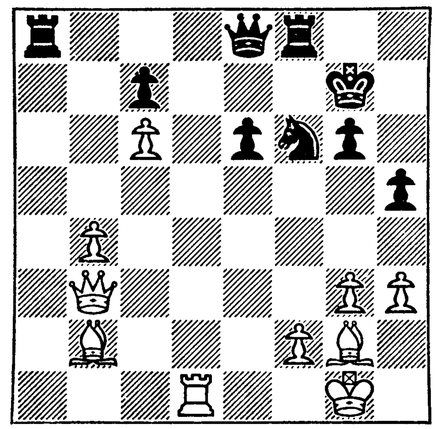
Of course 27 Q×P ch would be a mistake. K–R2, and the Knight at Q6 is lost.

27 ... Q–K1

Even so, rather better is 27 ..., Q×R ch; 28 Q×Q, P×Kt, which, however, only drags out the struggle.

28 Kt×B K×Kt

Position after Black's 28th move



Now White has only to capture the QBP in order to liquidate the last opposition. The finish shows what menacing force the Bishops acquire in open positions.

29 R–Q7 ch R–B2
30 B–K5!

With a double attack, on the pawn and on the Knight at KB3, in conjunction with 31 Q–KB3. Of course 30 ..., R×R is not possible because of 31 P×R, winning the Rook.

30 ... K–Kt1

Further "resistance" is useless.

31 R×P R×R
32 B×R R–R8 ch
33 K–R2 R–R2
34 B–K5 R–KB2
35 P–B7 Kt–Q2
36 Q–B2! R–B1
37 P–B8(Q) Resigns

A triumph for two Bishops!

No. 58. *Queen's Gambit Accepted (by transposition)*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*A. Alekhine* (Black)
1 Kt–KB3	P–Q4
2 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
3 P–B4	P–K3
4 Kt–B3	P–B4

This variation arose three times in the Alekhine–Euwe Return Match. Black aims at simplification, in order to facilitate his defence. The main variation 5 BP×P, Kt×P; 6 P–K4, Kt×Kt; 7 P×Kt, P×P; 8 P×P, B–Kt5 ch; 9 B–Q2, B×B; 10 Q×B, has no dangers for Black. Alekhine was well acquainted with Euwe's continuation: 5 B–Kt5, BP×P; 6 Kt×QP, P–K4; 7 Kt–B3! so I chose another road, more modest, and often followed by Soviet masters.

5 BP×P Kt×P
6 P–K3

This is a very reliable continuation, but it appears to lead to equality. In one game of his return match with Euwe, Alekhine played 6 P–KKt3, but that also should lead to an equal game.

6 ... Kt–QB3
7 B–B4

I thought of this move at the board, after I was convinced that the variation 7 P–QR3, B–K2; 8 B–Q3, O–O; 9 O–O, P×P; 10 P×P, B–B3; 11 B–K3, Kt×Kt; 12 P×Kt, P–K4, formerly met with, brings White no gain.

Black can most easily defend himself from the threat of 8 B×Kt, P×B; 9 P×P by playing 7 ..., Kt–KB3. It is easy to see that this move leads to a well-known position in the Queen's Gambit Accepted, rightly regarded as leaving an equal game.

Alekhine let slip this possibility, and after his next move he got into a difficult situation.

7 ... P×P
8 P×P B–K2
9 O–O O–O
10 R–K1

White's position is superior. Though the QP is isolated, it cramps Black considerably. But above all White has a wealth of possibilities with his pieces, the direct result of 7 ..., P×P, whereas Black still has to solve the problem of developing his Queen's Bishop.

10 ... P–QKt3

Probably this is a decisive mistake. Black should first play 10 ..., Kt×Kt (securing the long diagonal for his Queen's Bishop); 11 P×Kt, and then 11 ..., P–QKt3. True, even so the White QP is strengthened and White has obtained fair chances on the K side, but Black should have played thus. This, by the way, was how the Botvinnik–Szabo game went (Groningen, 1946).

Now White reduces the game to prosaic pressure on Black's Q side, weakened by his tenth move, a task which is facilitated by White's perceptible superiority in development. First and foremost the long diagonal must be closed.

11 Kt×Kt P×Kt
12 B–QKt5 B–Q2

Probably 12 ..., Kt–QR4 is more logical, though after 13 Kt–K5 White retains the initiative. 12 ..., B–Q2 leads to inevitable exchanges, after which White's superiority grows very clear.

13 Q–R4 Kt–Kt1

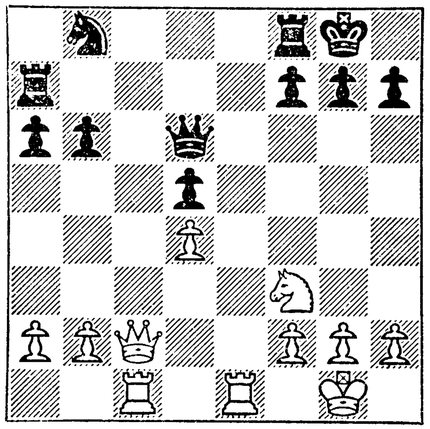
The only move. 13 ..., R–B1 is met by 14 B–Q2! (but not 14 B×Kt, B×B; 15 Q×RP, B–Kt5; and 16 ..., R–R1), P–QR3; 15 B×Kt, B×B; 16 Q×P, and Black gets no compensation whatever for the pawn. For that matter, now White's superiority in development increases still more.

14 B–KB4 B×B
15 Q×B P–QR3
16 Q–R4

Keeping the Black Knight from QB3 and also threatening 17 B×Kt, R×B; 18 Q×P. Black is forced to offer the exchange of Bishops.

16 ... B–Q3
17 B×B Q×B
18 QR–QB1 R–R2
19 Q–B2

Position after White's 19th move



With this move White hinders 19 ..., R–B2 and also firmly captures both the open files. Black's Knight is badly posted, and it is difficult to bring it into play. These factors permit the conclusion that Black has a lost position and White has only to find a good plan for exploiting his superiority.

If Black now attempts to wait on events with 19 ..., P–B3, after 20 Q–B5 and 21 Q–K6 an endgame unfavourable to him is forced.

19 ... R–K2

Now also a quite joyless endgame for Black is forced.

20 R×R Q×R
21 Q–B7 Q×Q

Of course the exchange is forced; the White Queen occupies too strong a position at B7.

22 R×Q P–B3!

Well played. The White Rook will ıve to retire from the seventh rank, ıd that relieves Black's situation a tle. Obviously, White should not ɔw play 23 R–Kt7, R–B1!; 24 –B1, P–QKt4 and the QB file is aominated by Black.

23 K–B1 R–B2
24 R–B8 ch R–B1
25 R–B3!

An intriguing situation! Black cannot move a single piece. Whether he plays 25 ..., Kt–Q2, or 25 ..., R–K1, or 25 ..., K–B2 White replies 26 R–B7 with advantage. Black's last chance is to bring the King into the centre. To do this he must advance the KKtP and KRP from his second rank.

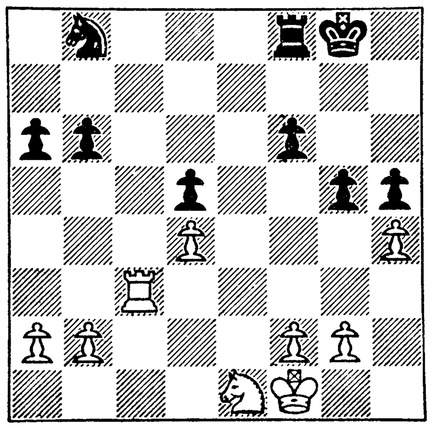
25 ... P–KKt4
26 Kt–K1 P–KR4

It seems as though Black has escaped the direct threats. Now there is nothing in 27 Kt–B2, K–B2; 28 R–B7 ch, K–K3; 29 R–KR7, Kt–Q2; but now White exploits the weakening of the Black's K side.

It has also to be noted that Black could not save the game with the continuation: 26 ..., P–R3; 27 Kt–B2, K–B2; 28 Kt–K3, K–K3; 29 P–KKt4! followed by 30 Kt–B5.

27 P–KR4!

Position after White's 27th move



A highly unpleasant move; 27 ..., P×P is followed by 28 Kt–B3. Alekhine rejected 27 ..., K–B2 as he was afraid of the variation: 28 P×P, P×P; 29 Kt–B3, P–Kt5; 30 Kt–K5 ch. I did not regard this variation as very convincing, so I proposed to follow 27 ..., K–B2 with 28 Kt–B3!, P–Kt5; 29 Kt–K1, K–K3; 30 Kt–Q3, K–B4; 31 P–KKt3 (or 31 P–B3), K–K5; 32 Kt–B4, and Black's position is unenviable.

27 ... Kt–Q2
28 R–B7 R–B2
29 Kt–B3 P–Kt5
30 Kt–K1 P–B4
31 Kt–Q3 P–B5

Otherwise 32 Kt–B4, but now Black will be finally in *zugszwang*. There is not even any point in White winning a pawn by playing 32 Kt–Kt4.

32 P–B3 P×P
33 P×P P–QR4
34 P–R4 K–B1
35 R–B6 K–K2
36 K–B2 R–B4
37 P–Kt3 K–Q1
38 K–K2 Kt–Kt1

A trap: if 39 R×P, then 39 ..., K–B2 and 40 ..., Kt–B3.

39 R–Kt6 K–B2
40 Kt–K5 Kt–R3

White's game is won just as he wishes.

41 R–Kt7 ch K–B1
42 Kt–B6

. At last the "harvest" begins. White comes out with at least two extra pawns.

42 ... R–B3
43 Kt–K7 ch K–Kt1
44 Kt×P R–Q3
45 R–Kt5 Kt–Kt5
46 Kt×Kt P×Kt

47 R×P R–QB3

Also hopeless is 47 ..., R×P; 48 R–KB5, K–Kt2; 49 R–B6, K–B2; 50 P–KR5.

48 R–QKt5 K–B2
49 R×KtP(5) R–R3
50 R–Kt5

50 K–Q3, R–K3! is weaker.

50 ... R×RP
51 K–Q3 Resigns

One of those games which have no brilliant moves whatever; every move seems very simple, yet it is impossible to cut out any one of them, for they are all closely interlocked.

Of course the difficulty of creating such a game lies not in the complexity of calculation involved, but that, when calculating, the position arising must be soundly appraised.

No. 59. *Nimzo-Indian Defence*

Botvinnik (White)	*Capablanca* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4 P–K3	

The Nimzo-Indian Defence is not to be refuted in this way, but recent practice has shown that it is doubtful whether there is any refutation. With 4 P–K3 White aims only at consolidating his centre, hoping that a strong centre will be useful to him in the middle-game.

4 ... P–Q4

So "theory" recommends, but this game shows that the move has certain disadvantages. If 4 ..., O–O the variation 5 P–QR3, B×Kt ch; 6 P×Kt might be disadvantageous to White because of the QBP's weakness; but now White can take this continuation, for the QBP can always be exchanged.

5 P–QR3 B×Kt ch

If 5 ..., B–K2, then 6 Kt–B3, and the result is one of the positions arising out of the Queen's Gambit Declined, but with the extra move P–QR3 for White.

6 P×B P–QB4

The most natural. White's basic plan is later to play P–B3, then P–K4, and break through in the centre. This will not be easy to carry through if Black in his turn organizes pressure on White's QP, which his sixth move is calculated to do.

7 BP×P KP×P

A debated question is how to recapture the QP. Black decides to take with a pawn, in order to make P–K4 almost impossible for White.

8 B–Q3 O–O
9 Kt–K2

So far the game recalls that between Lilienthal and Ragozin, Moscow, 1935, but in that game White had already played P–KB3. With the system White has adopted in this game he does not need to play this necessary move in the opening: a very important circumstance.

The piece most unpleasant for Black is the Bishop at Q3, so he plays to exchange it.

9 ... P–QKt3
10 O–O B–R3
11 B×B

Perhaps the Bishop should have been kept and retired to B2, but the Black Bishop at QR3 is then quite strong. But if Bishops are to be exchanged, it is best to do so as in the game, for it is difficult for Black's Knight at QR3 to reach the strong square QB5.

We may note, by the way, that after this game all this variation was checked in practice again and again, with changing fortunes for both sides.

11 ... Kt×B
12 B–Kt2

Passively played. Of course the sound move is 12 Q–Q3!, forcing 12 ..., Q–B1.

12 ... Q–Q2!
13 P–QR4

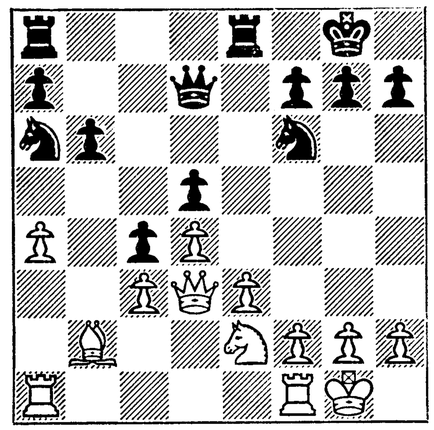
It is difficult for White to correct his inexact play of the last move. 13 Q–Q3 would be met by 13 ..., Q–R5!, so it is necessary to prepare 14 Q–Q3.

13 ... KR–K1

A surprising mistake for Capablanca to make. It was not at all difficult to find the continuation 13 ..., P×P! and after 14 BP×P, KR–B1 White has difficulties along the QB file. However, White would probably have sufficient resources available for his defence.

14 Q–Q3 P–B5

Position after Black's 14th move



This is a really serious positional blunder. Black evidently assumed that White would be unable to advance the KP later, and Black's superiority would tell on the Q side. Capablanca had in mind the manœuvre Kt–QKt1–QB3–QR4–QKt6, after which it is difficult for White to defend the QRP.

However, Black's superiority on the Q side happens in this case to be of no great consequence, and the break-through P–K4 proves inevitable. Black should have contented himself with the modest defence 14 ..., Q–Kt2.

15 Q–B2 Kt–Kt1
16 QR–K1

Psychologically understandable: White aims to show that he has no intention of defending the QRP at all. To be fair one must point out that this pawn could be saved easily by 16 B–R3, Kt–B3; 17 B–Kt4, and the play would be equal.

Even so it would have been more exact for White to play 16 Kt–Kt3, preventing 16 ..., Kt–R4.

16 ... Kt–B3

Black mistakenly assumes that the struggle will be decided by his winning the QRP, otherwise he was bound to play 16 ..., Kt–R4! preventing 17 Kt–Kt3 (the Knight exchange is disadvantageous to White). If 16 ..., Kt–R4 (Romanovsky suggested this move) the game would take a more complicated turn, e.g.: 16 ..., Kt–R4; 17 P–R3, P–B4; 18 B–B1, Kt–QB3; 19 P–B3, Kt–QR4; 20 P–Kt4, BP×P; 21 P×P, and Black's position on the K side gives cause for anxiety.

17 Kt–Kt3 Kt–QR4

An interesting moment: Black cannot in any way prevent the break-through P–K4. If 17 ..., Kt–K5 White would temporarily transfer his Knight to R1!

18 P–B3 Kt–Kt6
19 P–K4 Q×P
20 P–K5 Kt–Q2

20 ..., Kt–B4; 21 R–K2! leads to loss of the piece.

21 Q–B2

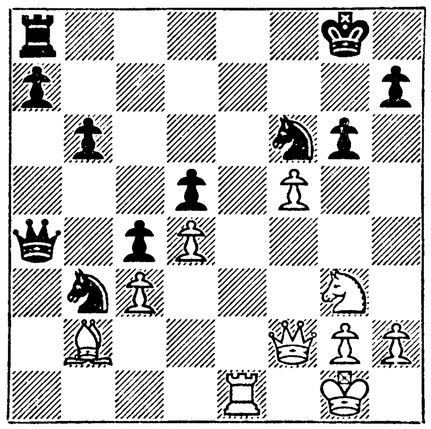
Forced because of the threat 21 ..., Kt–B4; but the Queen transfer to the K side comes into White's plan. Now Black must defend himself against Kt–B5–Q6, and against the advance of the KBP. Black's pieces cannot come quickly to their King's aid; and at the moment it is still far to the exploitation of his extra pawn. With his next manœuvre Capablanca gains the opening up of the K file, in the hope that simplification will be to his advantage.

21 ...	P–Kt3
22 P–B4	P–B4
23 P×P e.p.	

The only way to continue the attack.

23 ...	Kt×BP
24 P–B5	R×R
25 R×R	

Position after White's 25th move



25 ... R–K1

What follows will be forced. Black indirectly defends the Knight at B3 (26 P×P, P×P; 27 R×R ch, Kt×R) but this is insufficient.

Could he save the game with 25 ..., R–KB1? I think not. Here are the possible variations:

(1) 25 ..., R–KB1; 26 Q–B4!, Q–R7; 27 P×P!, Q×B (27 ..., P×P; 28 Q–Kt5); 28 P–Kt7, K×P; 29 Kt–B5 ch, K–R1; 30 Q–R6, R–B2; 31 Q×Kt ch, and 32 R–K8 ch.

(2) 25 ..., R–KB1; 26 Q–B4, Q–Q2; 27 R–K6, Kt–R4 (or 27 ..., Kt–K5; 28 Q–K5, Kt×Kt; 29 R–K7); 28 B–R3, R–B2; 29 Q–Kt5!

The second is the better, but it is doubtful whether even in this case Black could save the game.

26 R–K6! R×R

The only move. 26 ..., K–B2; 27 R×Kt ch, K×R; 28 P×P dis. ch, K×P (28 ..., K–K2; 29 Q–B7 ch, K–Q1; 30 P–Kt7); 29 Q–B5 ch, K–Kt2; 30 Kt–R5 ch, K–R3; 31 P–R4, R–KKt1; 32 P–Kt4, Q–B3; 33 B–R3! leads to immediate mate.

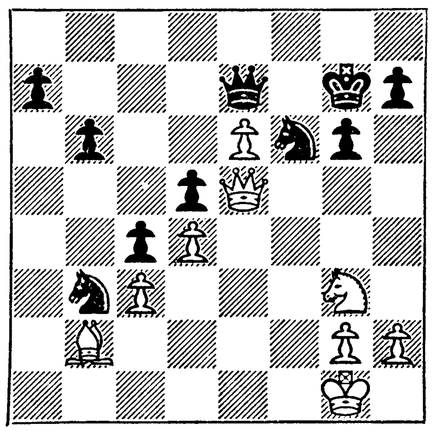
But now White gets a threatening pawn at K6.

27 P×R	K–Kt2
28 Q–B4!	Q–K1

To prevent 29 Kt–B5 ch, P×Kt; 30 Q–Kt5 ch.

29 Q–K5	Q–K2

Position after Black's 29th move



Black meets White's aims halfway, but in any case Q–K2 was inevitable. E.g. after 29 ..., Kt–R4; 30 B–B1!! (a threat of 31 B–R6 ch or 31 Q–B7 ch followed by 32 B–R6) Black is forced to play 30 ..., Q–K2 and White would follow the same combination as in the game.

30 B–R3!!	Q×B

Naturally, 30 ..., Q–K1; 31 Q–B7 ch, K–Kt1; 32 B–K7, Kt–Kt5; 33 Q–Q7 is not much better.

31 Kt–R5 ch!	P×Kt

Bad also is 31 ..., K–R3; 32 Kt×Kt, Q–B8 ch; 33 K–B2, Q–Q7 ch; 34 K–Kt3, Q×BP ch; 35 K–R4, Q×QP ch; 36 Kt–Kt4 ch!

32 Q–Kt5 ch	K–B1
33 Q×Kt ch	K–Kt1

If 33 ..., K–K1 White mates in two moves.

34 P–K7!

Only thus. It would be a mistake to play 34 Q–B7 ch, K–R1; 35 P–K7, Q–B8 ch; 36 K–B2, Q–Q7 ch; 37 K–Kt3, Q×BP ch; 38 K–R4, Q×P ch; 39 K×P, Q–K4 ch and the draw is inevitable. But now the Q pawn is defended, and Black cannot resort to perpetual check.

34 ...	Q–B8 ch
35 K–B2	Q–B7 ch
36 K–Kt3	Q–Q6 ch
37 K–R4	Q–K5 ch
38 K×P	Q–K7 ch
39 K–R4	Q–K5 ch
40 P–Kt4	

Even here care is needed: e.g. if 40 K–R3, then 40 ..., P–KR4!! and because of the threat 41 ..., Q–Kt5 ch a draw is inevitable.

40 ...	Q–K8 ch
41 K–R5	Resigns

NINETEEN THIRTY-NINE

In the spring of this year the finals of the tournament for the U.S.S.R. Eleventh Championship were played at Leningrad. The finish was exceptionally interesting. Before the last round Kotov and I had the same number of points; we met in this round, and he played White. Need I say that very many people wished to watch this game? The two halls of the House of Physical Culture were filled before it began. For those who were "unfortunate" the organizers set up a demonstration board on the embankment of the River Moika. The spectators were "accommodated" on the opposite side of the river also, and all traffic came to a standstill.

I managed to win this dramatic game (No. 64) and thus recovered the title of Soviet Champion.

From the creative aspect I played very successfully all through the championship, having a number of good games.

Here I must also mention the book of the games of this championship, which was published three months later. Ragozin and I jointly annotated some thirty games.

In an article printed in that volume I openly detailed my methods of preparing for contests, something which I think no chess master had ever done before. As ten years have passed since then and there has been no falling off in my successes, evidently I do not need to conceal my *methods*! But the results are a different matter!

U.S.S.R. ELEVENTH CHAMPIONSHIP

No. 60. *Grünfeld Defence*

A. Tolush (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–KKt3
3 Kt–QB3	P–Q4
4 B–B4	B–Kt2
5 P–K3	O–O
6 R–B1	

This strong move was played by Capablanca against Reshevsky in the second round of the Amsterdam 1938 tournament.

Capablanca did not arrive at this continuation straightway. In earlier games of the same tournament, against me and Flohr he had played 6 Q–Kt3; and only when he was convinced that this does not give White superiority did he find 6 R–B1, so strengthening the entire variation in White's favour.

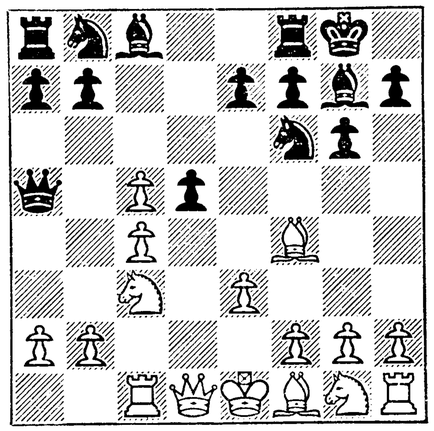
In this variation (with the White Bishop developed to B4) Black's basic opening problem is associated with P–QB4. If Black manages to achieve this painlessly he at once gets an equal game. The advantage of 6 R–QB1 consists in the fact that 6 ..., P–B4 is made difficult to the maximum.

6 ... P–B4

And none the less! Thus Reshevsky also played against Capablanca, and after 7 QP×P, Q–R4; 8 P×P, R–Q1; 9 Q–R4, Q×Q; 10 Kt×Q, Kt×QP Black gained at least equality. Until this game I had never analysed 6 R–B1, as I was influenced by the game I have mentioned. But the moment Tolush unhesitatingly played 6 R–B1 it was clear that he had found some new "strong resource." Before making my sixth move I had to recall the Amsterdam Tournament and thoroughly analyse the position. I came to the conclusion that White had the better chances, but, moved by curiosity, I decided to repeat all Reshevsky's moves, for I was deeply interested to find out what Tolush's discovery was.

7 P×BP Q–R4

Position after Black's 7th move



In a later game against Ragozin (Game No. 67 *infra*) I managed to find the stronger continuation for Black of 7 ..., B–K3! Since then Capablanca's 6 R–B1 is played more and more rarely in tournaments.

8 P×P R–Q1
9 Q–Q2

This is Tolush's "improvement." However, when making his analyses he saw by no means all the finesses. Now White gets an inferior game.

None the less Tolush did a service in drawing attention to this position, which really did provide great scope for analytical research.

Thus, here was found the move 9 B–B4, highly unpleasant to Black, defending the Q5 pawn (it was this move I was afraid of at the board). It was not easy for Black to find a sound continuation, if one exists at all.

9 ... Kt×P

10 B–B7

Beautiful, and that's all! Of course 10 Kt×Kt, Q×Q ch; 11 K×Q, R×Kt ch would be to Black's advantage.

10 ... Q×B
11 Kt×Kt R×Kt!

In all probability Tolush did not foresee this shrewd yet inviting sacrifice of the exchange. White is left hopelessly behind in development, and the Black pieces come into play with gains of tempo.

White counted only on 11 ..., Q–Q2; 12 R–Q1, P–K3; 13 Kt–B7! or 12 ..., Kt–B3; 13 Q–B2! and in both cases he should win.

12 Q×R B–K3

Inadequate is 12 ..., B×KtP; 13 R–B2, B–K3; 14 Q–Q2, and Black must lose time in withdrawing his Bishop, and in this particular situation "delay is death." Black had another, possibly still stronger continuation, at his disposal: 12 ..., Kt–B3, continuing after 13 Q–Q2 with 13 ..., B–B4!, or if 13 B–B4, then 13 B–K3. But this latter variation called for calculation, and I was afraid of squandering the time, which might be required in later complications.

White must withdraw his Queen to Q2, for 13 Q–K4 is followed by 13 ..., B×KtP.

13 Q–Q2 Kt–B3
14 R–Q1

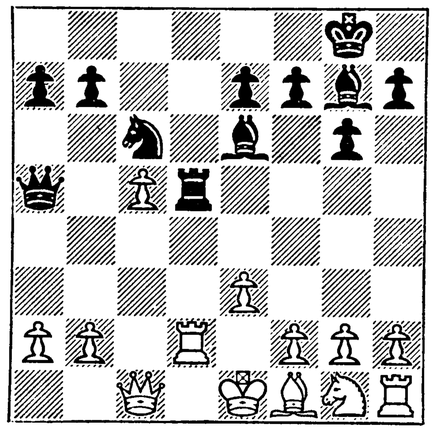
To meet the unpleasant threat of 14 ..., R–Q1; e.g. 14 B–B4, R–Q1; 15 Q–B2, Q–R4 ch; 16 K–B1, R–Q7; or 14 B–Q3, R–Q1; 15 Q–K2 (15 Kt–B3, B–B4), Kt–K4; 16 R–Q1, Q–R4 ch; 17 K–B1, R×B (also possible is 17 ..., Kt×B; 18 R×Kt, B–B5; 19 R×R ch, Q×R; 20 Q×B, Q–Q8 mate); 18 R×R, B–B5, and White is in a bad way. The pieces on the K side will not be able to come to the King's aid, so White mobilizes the Rook for defence.

However, he should have played 14 R–B3, and if 14 ..., R–Q1, then 15 R–Q3. If 14 R–B3 is followed by 14 ..., B×R; 15 Q×B, B×P; 16 Kt–B3, White can count on achieving equality. But if 14 ..., Kt–Kt5; 15 Kt–B3, R–Q1; 16 Kt–Q4, B×P (or B–B4) White's situation remains difficult.

Even so, in view of this possibility (14 R–B3) Black should probably have played 12 ..., Kt–B3, and not 12 ..., B–K3.

14 ... R–Q1
15 Q–B1 Q–R4 ch
16 R–Q2 R–Q4!

Position after Black's 16th move



The most energetic! White will be forced to surrender all the pawns on his Q side. If 17 Kt–B3, Black plays 17 ..., R×P; 18 Q–Kt1, B×RP; 19 Q–R1, R–B7; 20 B–Q3, R×P.

17 Kt–K2 R×P
18 Kt–B3 B×Kt

Less clear is 18 ..., R×Kt; 19 P×R, B×P; 20 B–Q3, B×P and Black has only two pawns to compensate for the loss of the more valuable Rook.

19 P×B R×P
20 Q–Kt2

If 20 Q–Kt1 the same reply would follow.

20 ... R–R6

With the murderous threat of 21 R×RP, after which the White King, stranded in the centre, would be defenceless.

21 Q–Kt5 Q–B6
22 Q–Kt2 Q–B4

Black continues to attack the RP. Obviously 23 Q×P, Q–B8 ch; 24 K–K2, B–B5 ch; 25 K–B3, Q×R; 26 B×B, Kt–K4 ch; 27 K–Kt3, R×KP ch!; 28 P–B3, Kt×B; 29 Q–B8 ch, K–Kt2; 30 Q×Kt, R–K7 leads to swift defeat.

23 Q–Kt1 B×P
24 R×B

There is nothing better.

24 ... Q–R4 ch
25 R–Q2 R–R8
26 B–Q3 R×Q ch
27 B×R

The two linked passed pawns should give Black a simple win. By retaining the Knight it would be easy to get the pawns queened. The continuation actually chosen, provoking an exchange of minor pieces, seems rather risky, but, as will be seen, it is the simpler road to victory.

27 ... Kt–K4
28 K–K2 Q–Kt4 ch
29 B–Q3 Kt×B
30 R×Kt P–QR4!

If White succeeded in developing his pieces while Black's pawns remained at QR2 and QKt2, he would have chances of a draw, for the Black King is cut off from the Q side, and the two Rooks would hold up the enemy pawns. But as the King, and the Rook at Q3 are posted very awkwardly, Black succeeds in advancing his infantry quite a long distance.

31 KR–Q1 Q–B5

The RP and KtP should be advanced together.

32 K–B3 P–QKt4
33 R–Q7 P–Kt5

If, now, R×P, then 34 ..., P–QKt6 followed by P–R5–R6, and Black queens the pawn.

34 R–QR7 P–QR5

The bad position of the White King facilitates Black's win.

35 R–Q8 ch K–Kt2
36 R(Q)–QR8 P–R6
37 P–Kt3 Q–Kt4

White resigns. If 38 R–R5 Black plays 38 ..., Q–Kt2 ch; and then the KtP advances to be queened.

No. 61. *French Defence*

I. Rabinovich (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K3
2 P–Q4	P–Q4
3 Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4 P–K5	P–QB4
5 P–QR3	B×Kt ch

The master V. Rauzer has performed exceptional service in thoroughly analyzing for White this variation of the French Defence.

From about the year 1924, the time of the Lasker–Maroczy game (New York, 1924) here 5 ..., P×P was always played, until in 1933 Rauzer demonstrated that White, by playing 6 P×B, P×Kt; 7 Kt–B3, Q–B2; 8 B–Q3 could get the stronger attack.

6 P×B Kt–K2

Rauzer investigated this position also. In 1934 he proposed 7 Q–Kt4, which leads to very sharp play. This move frightened some players so much that they even rejected the defence 6 ..., Kt–K2 in favour of

6 ..., Q–B2; in the latter case the continuation 7 Q–Kt4 is less dangerous because of 7 ..., P–B4.

In the Alexander–Botvinnik game, 1946, White was able to confirm Rauzer's view that after 6 ..., Kt–K2 the attack 7 Q–Kt4, P×P; 8 Q×KtP, R–Kt1; 9 Q×RP is very dangerous. So in a rather later game against Reshevsky (Moscow, 1946) I continued 5 ..., B–R4.

7 Kt–B3

The system of development associated with this move is also due to Rauzer. In reality, is White obliged to force the game? He has the freer position and two Bishops; he can, if necessary, exploit the Q6 square. The defect of his position is in the doubled QB pawns; at a convenient moment Black plays P–QB5, closing the position, and then the two-Bishop superiority will be imperceptible.

For this reason is not the entire variation ideal for Black, as viewed by a present-day player? A game with counter-chances adequately cancels out the advantage of first move.

7 ... QKt–B3
8 B–Q3

Now Black can play P–B5 with gain of tempo; with 8 B–K2 White does not lose a tempo, but then Black need not hurry with P–B5.

8 ... Q–R4
9 Q–Q2

Obviously, White does not want a draw: 9 O–O, Q×BP; 10 B–Q2, Q–Kt7; 11 R–Kt1, Q×RP; 12 R–QR1.

9 ... P–B5
10 B–K2 B–Q2

A fundamental error. Here much stronger is the continuation 10 ..., Q–R5, which I took in the later game with Pogrebyssky (see Game No. 63 *infra*) for it prevents White's 11 P–QR4. But now White's Bishop reaches QR3, and Black has a difficult game.

11 P–QR4 P–B3
12 B–R3 O–O–O

Bad is 12 ..., Q×RP; 13 O–O, and hardly better is 12 ..., O–O; 13 P×P, R×P; 14 B×Kt, Kt×B; 15 Kt–K5.

13 O–O Kt–B4

Of course, Black is not averse from consolidating his Knight at B4. But the preliminary 13 ..., P–KR4 is bad because of 14 P×P, P×P; 15 Kt–R4, and Black lacks the necessary Kt–Kt3, possible with the pawn at R2.

R–(Q1)–KB1–B2 was worth considering, for a Rook at B2 is better posted than at Q1. During the game I did not study this continuation.

During play there were many (including myself) who thought 13 ..., Kt–B4 was a mistake, as, by replying 14 P–Kt4, White could drive the Knight back, in other words, win a tempo. But afterwards I came to the conclusion that 13 ..., Kt–B4 is quite logical. White is forced to weaken his position with 14 P–Kt4 (otherwise, 14 ..., P–KR4), and in such a position such a weakening is more fundamental than the loss of one tempo.

It must also be said that the position of the pawns on the QB file makes it very difficult for White to manœuvre; his Q side communicates with the K side only on the back rank (QB1).

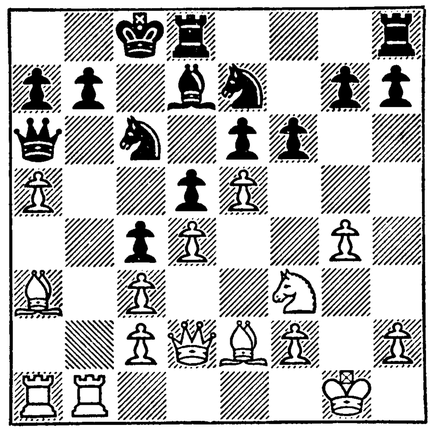
14 P–Kt4 Kt(B4)–K2
15 KR–Kt1 Q–R3

Now this is unnecessary! In fact White is still not threatening at all; doubling the Rooks on the Kt file would have no sense, as the Black KtP is safely defended. The sound

move is 15 ..., R(Q1)–KB1, and the weakening of the B4 square would soon have its effect. But now Black gets into a difficult situation.

16 P–R5!

Position after White's 16th move



Beautifully played! As of course the RP cannot be taken, the Black Queen is in a trap. This gives the game quite a new direction. The combinational threat Kt–K1–Q3!–B5 forces both sides to switch over to a consideration of definite variations.

16 ... R(Q1)–KB1
17 Kt–K1

Very many critics criticized Rabinovich for this move. They all (including myself) assumed that White's game is easily won and that the simplest course was 17 B–Q6. A closer study of the position leads to different conclusions: Black has considerable counter-play because of the weakness of White's KB4. He has only to resolve on a sacrifice of the exchange, in other words to choose the course he actually took after 17 Kt–K1. It seems to me that after 17 B–Q6, P×P; 18 P×P, Kt–Kt3; 19 B×R, R×B; 20 Q–K3, R–B5; or 18 Kt×P, Kt×Kt; 19 B×Kt, Kt–Kt3, one cannot assert that White's material advantage guarantees him victory.

17 ... P×P
18 Kt–Q3

Perfectly logical, but unsound. Playing 18 P×P, White could not follow with the threat of Kt–Q3. Alatortsev pointed out the sound variation 18 P×P, R–B2 (here a sacrifice of the exchange is not permissible: after 18 ..., Kt–Kt3; 19 B×R, R×B; 20 Kt–Kt2, Kt×KP; 21 P–B4 White has all the prospects of a win, because of the opening up of the game); 19 B–Q6 (not 19 Kt–Q3, P×Kt; 20 B×P, Kt×KP!), Kt–Kt3; 20 Q–K3 (again 20 Kt–Q3 is no use because of the same continuation), Kt–B5; 21 B–B3. However, in my view Alatortsev was mistaken in considering that "the connection between Black's pieces is broken." In this variation also, after 21 ..., P–Kt4 all the struggle still lies ahead, though the unfortunate position of the Black Queen justifies the assumption that White has the better play.

Now White wins the exchange by force, but that unexpectedly leads him into difficulties.

18 ... P×Kt

Otherwise 19 Kt–B5.

19 B×P Q×P
20 B×Kt Q–B2

As Rabinovich pointed out, after 20 ..., Kt×P White would immediately win by way of 21 B–K2!, Kt×B ch; 22 Q×Kt, Q×P; 23 B×R, R×B; 24 R×P, with the double threat: 25 R×KtP and 25 R–R8 ch.

21 B×R R×B
22 B–Kt5

The position has been simplified. Despite White's superiority in material, his chances are inferior, for there are many weaknesses in his camp. The exchange he has prepared involves no change in estimate of the position. 22 P×P would be met by 22 ..., Q×P, and Black has the initiative.

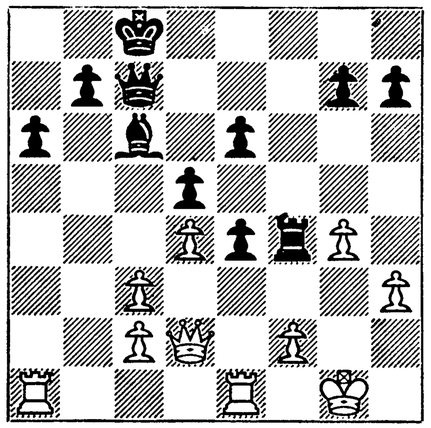
22 ... R–B5
23 P–R3 P–QR3
24 B×Kt B×B
25 R–K1

An inconspicuous error, which leads to a lost position for White. In no circumstances should he have allowed Black's 25 ..., P–K5, as after it he is condemned to passive defence.

For that matter, in the variation 25 P×P, R–B6 (weaker is 25 ..., Q×P; 26 R–K1, Q–B3; 27 R×KP, R×P ch; 28 P×R, Q×R; 29 Q–Q4); 26 Q–Q4, R×RP; White's situation is not easy, as there is a threat of Q–K2–R5, and if 27 K–Kt2 Black plays 27 ..., R×BP!

25 ... P–K5

Position after Black's 25th move



White's game is lost because of the weaknesses on the KB file and the existence of Black's passed QR pawn. However, before he can advance this pawn Black has to block the K side.

26 R–K3 B–Kt4
27 R–Kt3 P–Kt4
28 K–Kt2 Q–B2
29 Q–K3 Q–B3
30 R–K1

30 P–B3 is rather better, though it could not save the game. Later White does not even have this possibility. All the difficulty of his situation consists in the fact that two pieces, apart from the King, are tied up in defence of squares KB2 and KB3, which makes him impotent against the threat of the advance of the QRP.

30 ... B–K1
31 Q–K2

Now 31 P–B3 could be met by 31 ..., B–Kt3 followed by the Bishop's transfer to K5.

31 ... K–Kt1
32 R–QKt1 B–Kt4
33 Q–K3 B–K1
34 Q–K2 K–B2
35 R–KR1 B–Kt3
36 R–K1 B–K1
37 R–KR1 P–KR4!

Just at the right moment! The pawn at R4 will greatly cramp White, while 38 P×P, B×P!; 39 Q×B leads to mate: 39 ..., R×P ch; 40 K–Kt1, R–B8 ch; 41 K–R2, Q–B7 ch; 42 R–Kt2, Q–B5 ch, 43 R–Kt3, R–B7 ch; 44 K–Kt1; Q×R mate.

38 K–Kt1 B–Kt4
39 Q–K1 P–R5
40 R–K3 B–B5
41 R–R2

White intends to defend KB2 and KB3 with Rooks, and to stop the advance of the RP with his Queen. Probably the most expedient decision.

41 ... P–Kt3
42 Q–R1 Q–B1

Preventing 43 Q–R3.

43 R–Kt2 P–R4
44 Q–R4 Q–K2
45 Q–R1 K–Kt2
46 Q–R4 R–B1
47 R–K1 Q–Q3

White has no defence against 48 ..., K–R3 followed by 49 ..., P–Kt4.

48 Q–R1 K–R3
49 R–K3 P–Kt4
50 Q–Kt2!

Very well played. After 50 ..., P–R5; 51 Q–Kt4, Q×Q; 52 P×Q, R–B6; 53 K–R2! (but not 53 R×R, P×R; 54 R–R2, B–B8!!), P–R6; 54 R×R, P×R; 55 R–Kt1. Black ought not to win, as his King cannot break through.

50 ... R–B6
51 K–R1

The only move! As pointed out above, a loss follows 51 R×R, P×R; 52 R–R2, P–R5; 53 Q–Kt4, Q×Q; 54 P×Q, B–B8! Now Black plays a waiting game, in order to gain time on the clock, and meanwhile transfers the King to a better position.

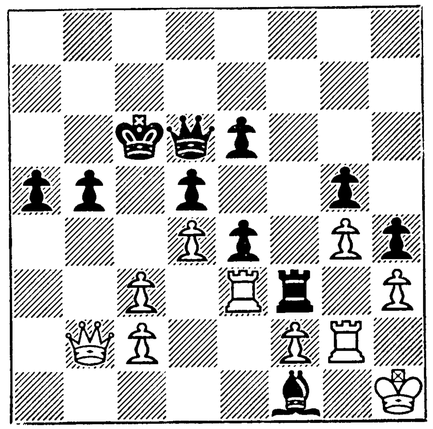
51 ... R–B3
52 K–Kt1 K–Kt3
53 R–R2 R–B2
54 R–Kt2 R–B6
55 K–R1 R–B1
56 K–Kt1 R–B3
57 R–R2 K–B3
58 R–Kt2 R–B6
59 K–R1 B–B8!

A mortal blow! White is forced to exchange Rooks, as if 60 R–R2, P–R5 there will be no stopping the RP, while 60 R–Kt1 is followed by 60 R×BP with the threat of 61 ..., Q–R7 mate.

60 R×R P×R!

Decides at once. Here are the approximate variations:

Position after Black's 59th move



(1) 61 R–Kt1, B×P; 62 R–Kt1, B–Kt7 ch; 63 K–Kt1, P–Kt5; 64 R–K1, P–KR6; 65 R–K5, P–R7 ch; 66 K×P, Q–B1; 67 R×KP ch, K–B2, and there is no defence against the mate.

(2) 61 R–Kt1, B×RP; 62 Q–B1, B–Kt7 ch; 63 R×B, P×R ch; 64 K×P, Q–B5! and the Queen endgame is hopeless, and after 65 Q×Q, P×Q; 66 P–Kt5, K–Q3 the KtP is stopped by the Black King.

That is why it was necessary to transfer the King to B3.

61 R–R2 P–R5
62 K–Kt1 P–R6
63 Q–B1 B–B5
64 Q×KtP P–R7
65 Q–B1 P–K4
66 P×P

Forced; otherwise P–K5–K6 follows.

66 ... Q×P
67 Q–R1 Q–K7

White resigns, for he cannot avert 68 ..., Q–B8 ch.

No. 62. *Nimzo-Indian Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White) — *I. Kann* (Black)

1 P–Q4 Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–K3
3 Kt–QB3 B–Kt5
4 Kt–B3

Strictly speaking, the "strongest" here (according to Tarrasch) is 4 Q–B2. But 4 Kt–B3 leads to variations which have been less studied.

4 ... P–QB4

One of the strongest replies.

5 P–QR3. B×Kt ch
6 P×B Q–R4

Evidently Black did not like the variation 6 ..., P–Q4; 7 P–K3, Kt–B3. But the development of the Bishop to Kt2 is playable here.

Now Black tries to facilitate his defence by exchanges.

7 B–Q2 Kt–K5
8 Q–B2

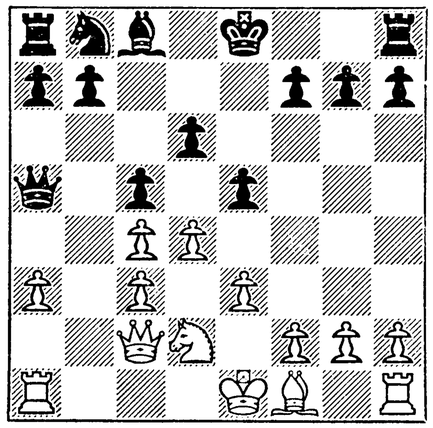
Necessary! After 8 P–K3, Kt×B; 9 Q×Kt, P×P; 10 KP×P, P–QKt3! Black easily obtains good play.

8 ... Kt×B
9 Kt×Kt P–Q3

I think stronger here is 9 ..., P×P; 10 P×P, Kt–B3; 11 P–K3, P–K4! and Black has good counterplay. 9 ..., P–Q3 is too passive.

10 P–K3 P–K4

Position after Black's 10th move



This is the prime cause of all the later difficulties! Black unthinkingly weakens Q4, which may serve as a good base for the White pieces. In addition, Black loses an important tempo, necessary to his development. The right move is 10 ..., Kt–B3.

11 P×KP P×P

A typical position. At first glance White has the inferior pawn structure, and so Black has nothing to fear. This would be correct if we could take all the pieces from the board. But there are still a lot of them left, and so the weakness of Black's Q4 is more serious than the doubled White QBPs. Moreover, these are even beneficial to White: the point is that to secure Q5 firmly White needs to advance his KP to K4, and then the doubled BPs will defend his Q4 against the Black pieces.

I have been able to prove the convenience of such a pawn arrangement in a number of games, e.g. with Sorokin (No. 20 *supra*), with Chekhover (No. 56, *supra*) and in a game against Panov, also played in the 11th U.S.S.R. Championship.

12 B–Q3 P–KR3

Otherwise Black cannot Castle, and in certain cases, if Black does not Castle, White can take the KRP.

12 ..., P–Kt3 is inadvisable if only because of 13 Kt–K4.

13 O–O O–O

This position too is highly instructive! White's natural plan consists in transferring the Knight to Q5. But if 14 P–K4, Kt–B3; 15 KR–Q1, B–K3; 16 Kt–B1, QR–Q1; 17 Kt–K3, Kt–K2 White gains nothing of value. Q5 is in his power, but that is all. If he plays Kt–Q5, Black exchanges the Bishop for the Knight and then transfers his Knight to Q3. But if White does not play Kt–Q5, an exchange of Rooks will take place along the open Q file, and a draw becomes inevitable.

So White makes an attempt to liven up the game a little.

14 P–B4 Kt–Q2

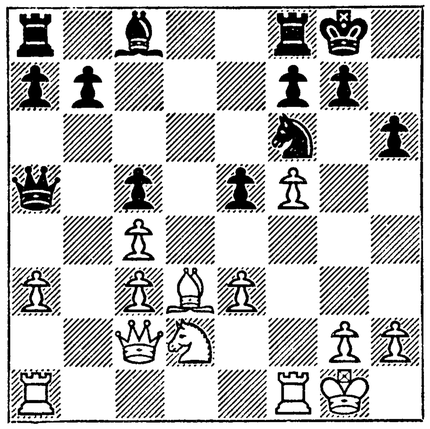
After 14 ..., P×P; 15 P×P the game would be opened up (along the K file!) and White, being better developed, could exploit it before Black. 14 ..., Kt–B3 is simpler, but Black has already thought of his next, mistaken move.

15 P–B5 Kt–B3

Maybe this is the decisive error! Black's move is directed against the

further advance of the KBP. But the right continuation is 15 ..., P–B3, though, of course, in this case White's position is to be preferred, as the central squares K4 and Q5 are under his control, and greatly facilitate the manœuvring of his pieces.

Position after Black's 15th move



Black rejects 15 ..., P–B3, but the result is that one of his pieces has to hold his KB3 all the time. But his chief trouble is that now White is able to exchange Knights, and then the White Bishop in the centre will dominate the board.

16 Kt–K4! Q–Q1

Exploiting the fact that the QBP is invulnerable: 17 Kt×P, Q–Kt3.

17 Kt×Kt ch Q×Kt
18 B–K4 R–Kt1
19 QR–Q1 P–QKt3
20 P–KR3

White's advantage is obvious, but he is still a long way from victory. E.g. the following variations lead nowhere:

(1) 20 B–Q5, B–Kt2; 21 Q–K4, B×B; 22 R×B, QR–Q1!

(2) 20 B–Q5, B–Kt2; 21 B×B, R×B; 22 Q–K4, R–Kt1!; 23 R–Q7, QR–Q1!

Similar variations are obtained from 20 P–QR4. White wins a pawn, but the road to victory remains in doubt. By opening up an escape-route for the King, White strengthens all these variations. So Black avoids them and goes for the break-through P–Kt4.

20 ... B–R3!
21 B–Q5 P–QKt4
22 P×P R×P

The only sound move is 22 ..., B×P; 23 P–B4, B–B3! In this case, after 24 Q–K4, B×B; 25 R×B, White would win a pawn, but because of the Bishop exchange the open QKt file would give Black counter-play. But now White keeps the Q5 Bishop, his chief hope, and at once Black is in a bad way.

23 P–B4 R–Kt3
24 R–Kt1

Preventing both Black's capture of the open QKt file, and the move 24 ..., B–Kt2.

24 ... R–Q1

Black cannot capture the QKt file: 24 ..., KR–Kt1 is met by 25 R×R, Q×R; 26 P–B6! with the deadly threat of 27 Q–Kt6. If 25 ..., R×R; (the relatively better continuation) then either 26 R–Kt1, or the more energetic 26 Q–R4, Q–K2; 27 P–B6, P×P; 28 Q–B2, K–Kt2; 29 R–B3, with a strong attack. In this last variation there is nothing better for Black in 26 ..., K–B1; 27 Q–R5, Q–K2; 28 P–B6, P×P (28 ..., R×P; 29 R×R, Q×R; 30 Q×P ch, Q–K2; 31 Q–B6!, Q×RP; 32 Q–R8 ch); 29 Q–K1, and White also has good attacking possibilities.

24 ..., R–Q1 leads to a hopeless position.

25 R×R P×R

Or 25 ..., Q×R; 26 R–Kt1 (not 26 P–B6, R×B; 27 R–Kt1, R–Q7), Q–B3; 27 P–K4.

26 P–K4

Parrying the threat 26 ..., R×B. If 26 ..., P–QKt4; then 27 P×P, B×P; 28 R–Kt1, winning a pawn.

26 ... B–B1
27 Q–R4

Otherwise with 27 ..., B–Q2 Black would prevent this Queen transfer.

27 ... B–Q2
28 Q–R7 B–K1
29 R–Kt1 R–Q3
30 P–QR4

Thus White wins a pawn, which at once decides the outcome.

30 ... K–R2
31 P–R5 P×P
32 Q×RP

Of course, not Q×BP, P–R5, with complications.

32 ... R–R3
33 Q×BP R–R7
34 Q–K3

34 ..., Q–Kt4 could not be allowed.

34 ... Q–R3
35 R–Kt8 Q–R5
36 K–R2

An important move! Black lacks one tempo for doubling his pieces on his 8th rank. 36 ..., Q–B7 is most simply refuted by 37 Q–Kt3, R–R8; 38 R×B, Q–Q8; 39 Q–Kt6 ch!, P×Q; 40 B–Kt8 ch, K–R1; 41 B–B7 dis. ch, K–R2; 42 B×P mate.

36 ... R–R6
37 Q–B5 R–R7
38 R–R8 Q×R

Equivalent to resignation. 38 ..., Q–B7; 39 R×R, Q×R; 40 Q–K7 does not alter matters.

39 B×Q R×B
40 Q×P B–B3
41 Q–B7 Resigns

No. 63. *French Defence*

I. Pogrebyssky (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K3
2 P–Q4	P–Q4
3 Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4 P–K5	P–QB4
5 P–QR3	B×Kt ch
6 P×B	Kt–K2
7 Kt–B3	QKt–B3
8 B–Q3	Q–R4
9 Q–Q2	P–B5
10 B–K2	Q–R5

So far, as in the Rabinovich–Botvinnik game (No. 61, *supra*), where I mistakenly played 10 ..., B–Q2, so allowing 11 P–QR4. The advantage of the continuation 10 ..., Q–R5 is that now White cannot easily play P–R4; and so his Queen's Bishop cannot reach Q6.

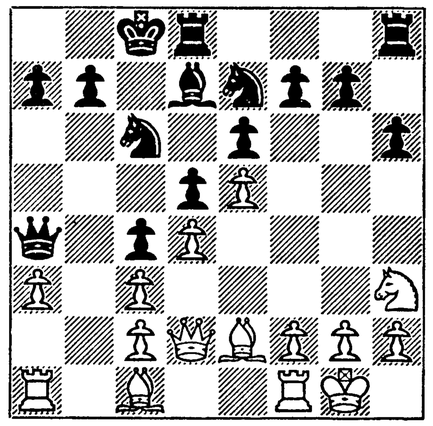
Now White could provoke 11 ..., P–QKt3 with 11 R–QKt1, but that leaves matters substantially the same.

11 O–O B–Q2
12 Kt–Kt5

A good move, to which Black's reply should probably have been 12 ..., O–O, with an approximately equal game. After Black's instinctive reply White's game is perhaps just a little the better.

12 ... P–KR3
13 Kt–R3 O–O–O

Position after Black's 13th move



Black cannot Castle short because of the manœuvre Kt–B4–R5 × KtP! Black Castles long, but maybe 13 . . ., Kt–Kt3 is sounder.

14 P–B4

Only now is it clear that White's good move 12 Kt–Kt5 was made with a very bad idea behind it. It transpires that White intends via Kt–B2–Q1–QKt2 to get his RP into motion. It's not worth the trouble, too much precious time is spent on this manœuvre!

I was expecting 14 Kt–B4, which would be followed by 14 . . ., QR–B1; 15 Kt–R5, R–R2! and the play would be about equal. 14 P–KB4 suits Black, as it still further cramps White's Queen's Bishop.

14 . . . P–B3
15 Kt–B2 P–KR4

Black gets an excellent position for his Knight at KB4; in this variation it is the first symptom showing that White has chosen an unsound plan.

16 Kt–Q1 Kt–B4
17 Kt–Kt2

17 B × RP, R × B; 18 P–Kt4 leads to an irreparable weakening of White's K side.

17 . . . Q–R4
18 P–QR4 P–KKt4!

Here I had to consider also the variation 18 . . ., B–K1; 19 Kt–Q1, B–Kt3; 20 Q–K1, Kt(4) × QP; 21 P × Kt, Q × Q; 22 R × Q, Kt × QP; though Black gets three pawns for the piece, the position is rather in White's favour.

As 19 P × KtP, P × KP! is not at the moment possible, White cannot prevent 19 . . ., P–KKt5, after which the Bishop at K2 will be blocked.

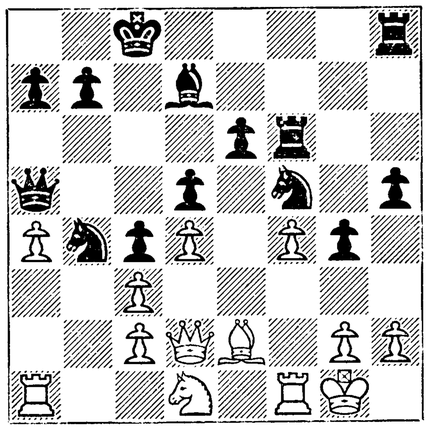
Black has positionally a completely won game. The only question is where he should break through. I think on the Q side, for here the break-through is facilitated by White's awkward pawn position.

19 Kt–Q1 P–Kt5
20 P × P

This eases Black's task; through Q3 his Knight can always get to K5. True, White wins a tempo for developing his Queen's Bishop, but this is now not so important, and so it would have been better to refrain from 20 P × P. On the other hand, 20 Q–K1 is too tedious (20 B–R3, Kt(4) × QP; is immediately bad) and so is 20 Kt–K3, Kt × Kt; 21 Q × Kt, Kt–K2!; 22 P × P, Kt–B4; 23 Q–Q2, Kt–Q3.

20 . . . QR–B1
21 B–R3 R × P
22 B–Kt4 Kt × B

Position after Black's 22nd move



A positional blunder, after which the game is almost equalized! The White QB pawns will be parted, and Black's prospects on the Q side amount to nothing, while White so far has no weaknesses on his K side. In addition, the Bishop at K2 returns to life. Black should have withdrawn his Queen to B2.

23 P × Kt Q–Kt3

Q–B2 at once is better.

24 P–B3 Q–B2

Black has only one hope of a win: to break through along the KR file. To do this he must provoke P–KKt3; and this he aims at, organizing an attack on the KBP.

25 Kt–Kt2

25 Kt–K3 or even 25 Kt–B2 is obligatory here. The Knight is necessary to the defence of the K side. At Kt2 he is shut out of the game, and Black carries through his plan unhindered.

25 . . . R(R1)–B1!
26 B–Q1 Kt–K2
27 P–Kt3

The first part of Black's plan has been carried out; P–Kt3 has been forced. Now the Black pieces are transferred to the KR file.

27 . . . R–R1
28 B–B2 P–R5
29 K–Kt2 Kt–B4

Doubling the major pieces on the KR file is insufficient for victory; with the text move Black begins to clear his second rank for his Queen's passage to KR2.

30 B × Kt

This only facilitates Black's win, for it weakens K4.

30 . . . R × B
31 Q–K2

Loses at once. White does not even have time later on to sacrifice the exchange at K4.

31 . . . R(B4)–R4
32 R–R1 P–K4!

A tactical stroke consummating the struggle. The Bishop breaks into the opponent's camp.

33 QP × P B–B4
34 QR–KKt1 P × P
35 K–B1 R × P
36 R × R R × R
Resigns

No. 64. *Ragozin's Defence*

A. Kotov (White) — *M. Botvinnik* (Black)

1 P–Q4 Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–K3
3 Kt–QB3 B–Kt5
4 Q–B2

At the period of this game Kotov always played 4 Kt–KB3 or 4 P–K3. But against me he chose 4 Q–B2, and this was not a haphazard move. The point is that in a game against Makogonov I had adopted the system, for Black: 4 . . ., Kt–B3 and 5 . . ., P–Q4. It is obvious that White would find it very attractive to provoke me into these same variations, which theory reckoned to be in White's favour.

4 . . . Kt–B3

Understandably the continuation 4 . . ., P–Q4, which has been worked at in too great detail, did not suit me, for by my position in the tournament I had to play to win this game.

5 Kt–B3 P–Q4
6 P–K3

Makogonov continued 6 P–QR3, B × Kt ch; 7 Q × B, Kt–K5; 8 Q–B2, P–K4; and Black has a counter initiative. Kotov prefers to transpose the play from the Nimzo-Indian Defence to a well-known variation of Ragozin's Defence, which is generally regarded as favourable to White.

6 . . . O–O
7 P–QR3 B × Kt ch
8 Q × B B–Q2

So the result is Ragozin's Defence, with moves interchanged. ((1) P–Q4, P–Q4; 2 P–QB4, P–K3; 3 Kt–QB3, Kt–KB3; 4 Kt–B3, B–Kt5; 5 Q–B2, Kt–B3; 6 P–K3, O–O; 7 P–QR3, B × Kt ch; 8 Q × B, B–Q2.)

This is a characteristic modern defence system against 1 P–Q4.

Black yields his opponent the advantage of two Bishops and goes for a rather cramped arrangement of his pieces. Why does he do all this? Basically for the sake of swift development. And in fact so far as Black is concerned the opening is ended, whereas White's development is still far from completion. Black is ready for any operation, while White must play with great caution, as he is lagging in development. E.g. 9 P–Kt4, P–R4!; 10 P–Kt5, Kt–R2; 11 P–R4, P–B3 is bad; the play is opened up, and Black is already prepared for that.

With such a method of playing the opening, i.e. ignoring symmetrical moves and aiming at counter-play, the advantage of the move is less perceptible. This, in my view, is what present-day players aim at when playing Black.

9 P–QKt3 P–QR4
10 B–Q3

The first inexact move!

Black's plan is quite simple: exploiting the fact that White has made the move P–QR3, he aims to capture the white squares on the Q side. It is difficult to prevent this, but if 10 B–Kt2, P–R5; 11 P–Kt4, P×P; 12 B×P, Kt–R2 (followed by 13 ..., B–Kt4) the play is approximately equal. But now in the variation 10 ..., P–QR5; 11 P–Kt4, P×P; 12 B×P Black gains an important tempo.

10 ... P–R5
11 Kt–Q2

The second inexact move!

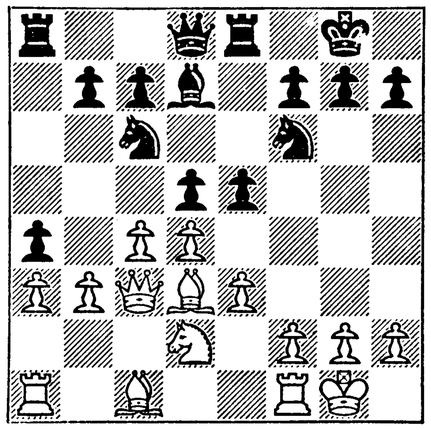
White did not like the variation indicated above, though it was perfectly playable. Black immediately exploits the weakening of pressure on the central square K5.

11 ... R–K1
12 O–O

A sound decision: White does not prevent 12 ..., P–K4. He is too backward in development to permit himself 12 P–B4, which would involve a further weakening of the white squares. After 12 P–B4, Kt–QR4; 13 O–O, RP×P; 14 Kt×P, Kt×P; 15 B×Kt, P×B; 16 Q×P, B–B3 White's K side arouses serious anxiety.

12 ... P–K4

Position after Black's 12th move



13 QP×P

The third inexact move!

After 13 B–Kt2, P–K5; 14 B–K2, Kt–QR4 Black's superiority is undoubted, as he forcedly obtains an excellent base at Q4 for his pieces; but with this continuation events would develop at a slower tempo. Probably, in exchanging at K5 White intended to develop pressure on KKt7 along the closed diagonal QR1–KR8. However, just the reverse happens: White has difficulties with the defence of his K side.

13 ... Kt×P
14 B–Kt2

White cannot even dare to dream of keeping both his Bishops: 14 B–K2 is followed by 14 ..., Kt–K5; 15 Kt×Kt, P×Kt; 16 B–Kt2, Q–Kt4 with an increasing attack.

For that matter, Black also has no intention of yielding his excellently centralized Knight so readily.

14 ... RP×P

A very important move! White intended to play 15 KR–Q1 with pressure along the Q file.

15 Kt×P

The fourth inexact move, and this time decisive!

Black forces a won position. White rejected 15 Q×P, as then the Rook could not get to Q1 because of Black's reply B–R5. Even so White should have taken the pawn with the Queen.

15 ... Kt–K5!

Immediately exploiting the absence of the White Knight from the centre. Now White has only one reply. Both 16 B×Kt, P×B followed by 17 ..., Q–Kt4, and 16 Q–Q4, P–B4; 17 Q×P, Kt–B3 are bad.

16 Q–B2 Kt×QBP

Black intends to put pressure on White's KKt2. So the Bishop at Q3 must be exchanged off, and the remaining Bishops of opposite colours only facilitate Black's attack.

17 B×Kt(B4) P×B
18 Q×P Q–Kt4!

A threat of both 19 ..., B–Kt4 and 19 ..., B–R6, winning the exchange in either case. To defend KKt2 with his Queen at QB2 White is forced to play P–B4 and reconcile himself to a decisive weakening of his pawn structure, as it will be difficult to defend the KR1–QR8 diagonal.

Here it is not enough to play at once 19 Q–B2, in the hope of parrying 19 ..., B–R6 with 20 P–B4, for to 19 Q–B2 Black will continue 19 ..., B–R5; 20 KR–Q1, R–R3 with an easy win.

19 P–B4 Q–Kt3

This position must be reckoned as won for Black. One can imagine the general astonishment when, annotating this game in the newspaper "64," Belavenietz (who in general was one of the most outstanding of Soviet analysts) wrote that after 20 Q×QBP "there is nothing decisive apparent for Black," and backed up his opinion with a large number of variations! But in reality 20 Q×BP is followed by 20 ..., B–R6; 21 Q–B2, QR–B1; 22 Q–K2, Kt–Q3 (Belavenietz did not notice this move) and White can hardly save himself. For instance:

(1) 23 QR–B1!, R×P; 24 R×R ch, Kt×R; 25 Q–Q2, R–Q6; 26 Q–K2, Q×KtP ch; 27 Q×Q, B×Q; 28 R–K1, B–B3.

(2) 23 Kt–Q4, R×P; 24 Q–B2, Kt–K5; 25 P–B5, Q–Kt5.

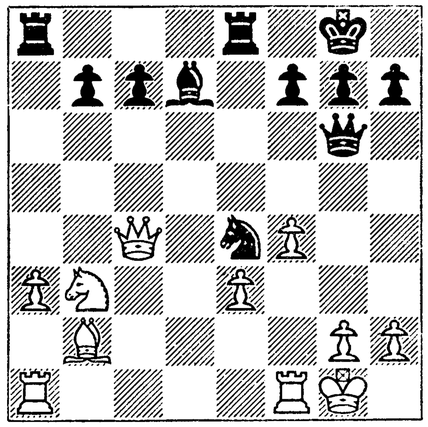
(3) 23 R–B2, B–Kt5; 24 Q–K1, Kt–K5; 25 R–KB1, R–B7; 26 Q–Kt1, R–K7 (also possible: 26 ..., R×KtP ch).

(4) 23 B–Q4, R–B7.

(5) 23 P–B5, Kt×P.

With his next move White rebutts Black's threat of 20 ..., B–K3; 21 Q–B2, B×Kt; and 22 ..., Kt–Q7.

Position after Black's 19th move



20 KR–Q1 Kt–Q3

At all costs Black must avoid exchanging off his excellent Bishop. Thus, if 20 ..., B–B3; then 21 Q–B2, and if occasion offers, 22 Kt–Q4. But now White cannot play 21 Q×P because of 21 ..., B–B3!

21 Q–Q3 B–B4
22 Q–B3 B–K5

Probably still stronger is 22 ..., B–R6; 23 P–Kt3 (23 Q×P ch, Q×Q; 24 B×Q, B–K3!), P–R4, etc. But the text continuation is also quite convincing.

23 R–Q2 B–B3
24 Q–Q3 Kt–B4

If 24 ..., B–K5, then 25 Q–B3, Kt–B4; 26 Kt–B5! But now, in addition to 25 ..., R×P, there is a threat of 25 ..., B–K5; 26 Q–B3, Kt–R5. White's next move is his only defence.

25 B–K5 P–B3
26 B×QBP

The more complicated continuation 26 P–K4, Kt–R5; 27 B×QBP, R×P; 28 Q–Kt3, Q–B2; 29 B–Kt6, Kt–B4 also would not save White.

26 ... R×KP
27 Q–B4 ch K–R1
28 B–Kt6 R(K6)–K1

The simplest! White must defend himself against 29 ..., Kt–R5.

29 Q–KB1 P–R4
30 Kt–Q4

Perhaps he should have resolved on 30 Kt–R5, B–K5. Black of course will readily exchange Knights, as that would strengthen the position of the Bishop at B3, especially as 30 ..., Kt–K6 is no good because of 31 Q–Q3! With the Knight exchange White is condemned to complete passivity.

30 ... Kt×Kt
31 B×Kt

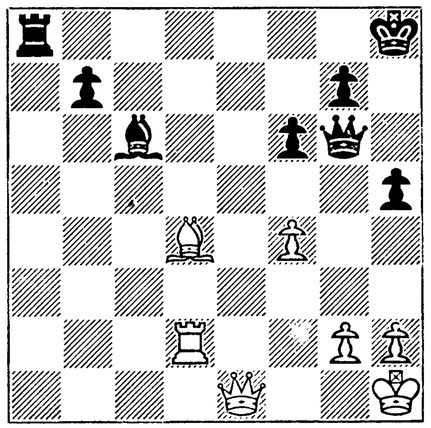
A little better is 31 R×Kt, preventing Black from playing 31 ..., R–K5.

31 ... R–K5
32 R–K1

The only move! Otherwise there follows 32 ..., QR–K1, then Q–Kt5 and R–K7, and White's KKt2 is indefensible.

32 ... R×R
33 Q×R R×P
34 K–R1 R–R1

Position after Black's 34th move



Both sides had little time for thought; this explains the inexact play which can easily be detected in recent moves of both Black and White.

Thus, White should not have withdrawn his King to KR1, while after this move Black could have won another pawn with 34 ..., R–KB6.

However, this does not affect the estimate of the position: White cannot save the game.

35 R–K2 K–R2
36 P–R3 R–K1
37 Q–B2

White falls into an artful trap which Black had thought of at the 34th move. But even after the better 37 Q–Q2, R–Q1; 38 Q–K3, Q–B4; 39 K–Kt1, P–Kt4, he could not have put up any lengthy resistance.

It is an interesting fact that seven years later, in a game against Himar (Groningen, 1946) Kotov (remembering the foregoing game!) himself caught his opponent in a similar trap; with the sole difference that in the later game the pin was not along a diagonal, but along a vertical!

37 ... Q×KtP ch!
38 Q×Q R×R
Resigns

NINETEEN FORTY

So far as my performance in chess was concerned, this year was a mixture of good and bad. To begin with I succeeded in winning a match against Ragozin. This was of considerable importance, as hitherto I had been much weaker in match than in tournament play. Ragozin is a dangerous opponent, especially in match play, and so I had to put quite a lot of work into the match, and to think out "match strategy and tactics" in detail, in order to win.

On the other hand, in this same year I suffered the bitterness of defeat in the U.S.S.R. Twelfth Championship, played at Moscow. During the first half of the tournament I did not do badly and was in the lead; but then I lost grip, and I finished only in the fifth-sixth places. Presumably I had not been sufficiently thorough in applying the methods of preparation which I myself had written about!

Three games from this tournament (from the first half, of course) are given in this collection.

BOTVINNIK–RAGOZIN MATCH

May

No. 65. *Slav Defence*
3rd Game of Match

Botvinnik (White) — *Ragozin* (Black)

1 P–Q4 P–Q4
2 P–QB4 P–QB3
3 Kt–QB3 Kt–B3

Since the eighth game of the Keres–Euwe match (1940), 3 ..., P×P is rarely played; the variation 4 P–K4, P–K4; 5 Kt–B3, P×P; 6 Q×P is obviously in White's favour.

4 P–K3 P–KKt3

With the order of moves White has chosen (3 Kt–QB3, and not 3 Kt–KB3), 4 ..., B–B4 is bad because of 5 P×P, P×P; 6 Q–Kt3. But if Black does not wish to play 4 ..., P–K3 either—it may lead to the Meran Variation—he cannot do better than play the Schlechter Variation (4 ..., P–KKt3).

5 Kt–B3 B–Kt2
6 B–Q3 O–O
7 O–O B–Kt5

A dubious system of development in use 25 years ago. True, Black has solved the problem of development of the QB, but he leaves White the advantage of the pair of Bishops.

8 P–KR3 B×Kt
9 Q×B P×P

A positional error. White's two Bishops may be powerful if the game is opened, so Black should not have exchanged in the centre. 9 ..., P–K3 is more logical.

10 B×P QKt–Q2
11 R–Q1 P–K4

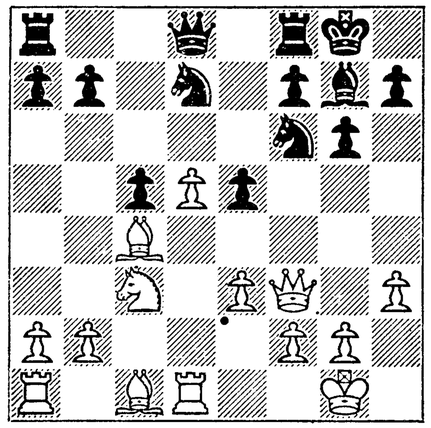
Bogoljubov, against Marshall (Baden-Baden, 1925) played 11 ..., Kt–K1, but did not equalize the game. The text move also is no novelty; it occurred in a Bogoljubov–Rabinovich game, played in the U.S.S.R. Fourth Championship, Leningrad, 1925.

Now, of course, it is not in

White's interest to play 12 P×P, Kt×P; but he can operate on the Q file, with P–Q5. This has the advantage that Black's Bishop remains blocked.

12 P–Q5 P–B4

Position after Black's 12th move



Rabinovich played 12 ..., Q–B2 and was left with an inferior game.

13 P–Q6

This move should be made before P–K4 as White, in attacking the QKtP with his Queen, gains a tempo.

13 ... R–Kt1
14 P–K4 Kt–K1

Black makes an attempt to capture the QP, but nothing comes of it. Moreover, even if he were to succeed, White would still have the better position, as he would control files for his own pieces. White's sole danger would arise if Black could transfer one of his Knights to Q5; but he cannot.

15 B–K3 P–QR3
16 P–QR4 R–B1

Of course, neither now nor earlier could Black play 16 ..., Q–Kt3, because of 17 Kt–Q5, and if 17 ..., Q×QP, then 18 B–KKt5, leading to capture of the Queen.[1]

17 R–Q2 P–R3

The attempt to win the pawn could still be refuted by various means. The simplest of all would be: 17 ..., R–B3; 18 QR–Q1, Kt–Kt3; 19 B–Q5, Kt×B; 20 R×Kt, and White breaks through Black's front. Nor is the manœuvre Kt–Kt1–B3–Q5 possible.

Black is preparing 18 ..., Kt(K)–B3, which if played at once would be dubious because of 18 B–Kt5; in addition his aim is to transfer his K1 Knight through B3–R2–Kt4–K3 to Q5.

18 QR–Q1

Perhaps 18 Q–Q1 followed by 19 P–QR5 and then Kt–Q5 is even stronger.

18 ... Kt(K1)–B3
19 Kt–Q5

Firstly, with this move White prevents the Knight manœuvre abovementioned, and secondly, every exchange increases the strength of the QP.

19 ... Kt×Kt
20 B×Kt R–Kt1
21 Q–K2 K–R2
22 R–B2 Q–B3

This is a serious error. The QBP needs protection, so Black should have played 22 ..., Q–R4, and although after 23 P–Kt3 all Black's pieces occupy passive positions, there is no obvious immediate threat to them. Even so, because of the pawn on Q6 White's win is only a question of time.

Now White could gain considerable superiority by 23 B×BP, Kt×B; 24 R×Kt, Q×P; 25 R(Q1)–QB1. But he prefers to keep the Q6 pawn and to exploit the weakness of Black's QB2.

[1] e.g. 19 Kt–B6 ch, B (or Kt)×Kt; 20 R×Q; or 19 Kt—K7 ch, K—R 1. But 18 ..., K—R1 forestalls. S.G.

23 B–R2 R(Kt1)–B1

Otherwise 24 B×QBP.

24 P–QKt4

Black has no way of defending the BP; so he is forced to let the White Rook penetrate to the seventh rank.

24 ... P×P
25 R–B7 R×R

This of course speeds up the denouement, but it is obvious that against White's two powerful Bishops, the pawn on Q6, a Rook on the seventh rank, and equality in material the "struggle" would not be very interesting.

26 P×R Kt–Kt3

26 ..., Q–B3 could be met by 27 Q–B4.

27 B×Kt Q×B
28 Q–B4 R–B1
29 R–Q7

The rest is obvious. There is no escape.

29 ... Q–QB3
30 Q×Q P×Q
31 R×P P–B4
32 B–K6 Resigns

No. 66. *English Opening*
5th Game of Match

Botvinnik (White)	*Ragozin* (Black)
1 P–QB4	P–K4
2 Kt–QB3	Kt–KB3
3 Kt–B3	Kt–B3
4 P–Q4	P–K5

The general attitude to this move is critical and rightly so. The advanced KP causes Black a good deal of trouble, and White has an easy game. Here 4 ..., P×P is more circumspect.

5 Kt–Q2 B–Kt5

This move, which Ragozin also played against Riumin (Moscow, 1935) enables White to retain a strong pawn centre; more prudent is 5 ..., Kt×P as Flohr played against me in the fifth game of our match (Moscow, 1933).

6 P–K3 O–O
7 B–K2

In the above-mentioned game Riumin played 7 Q–B2, recaptured at B3 with his Queen and then Castled long—a course leading to double-edged chances. In the present game White pursues a different plan: the immediate undermining of the KP, Black's one strong point in the centre.

7 ... R–K1

Ragozin also played thus against Riumin; in that case it was obligatory, here perhaps he should have resolved on 7 ..., P–Q3.

8 O–O B×Kt

Sooner or later the exchange was necessary.

9 P×B P–Q3
10 P–B3

White consistently pursues his attack on the KP. It transpires that Black cannot hold the centre: 10 ..., B–B4; 11 P×P, B×P; 12 Kt×B, Kt×Kt; 13 B–Q3, and because of the double threat 14 R–B4 and 14 B×Kt followed by R×BP Black will have no time to play P–KKt3 and P–B4, consolidating K5 for himself. Even so perhaps he should have chosen this variation; he might have been a pawn down but he would have had counter-play.

10 ... P×P
11 B×P!

White had this continuation in mind when he played 7 B–K2. The K4 square has been won from Black.

If Black declines the pawn sacrifice with 11 ..., Kt–K2, there follows 12 Kt–K4, Kt×Kt; 13 B×Kt, and White retains the initiative. Black accepts the sacrifice, which is clearly imprudent, as White's Queen's Bishop will come into play with great force.

11 ... R×P
12 Kt–Kt3 R–K1

Naturally, 12 ..., R×P would also be followed by 13 B–Kt5! and then Q–Q2, and Black would be quite helpless.

13 B–Kt5 Kt–K2

Even so the doubling of pawns on the KB file cannot be avoided. White in his turn is in no hurry to exchange at KB6, for he does not want to simplify the play, and he exploits the lull to bring up reserves.

14 Q–Q2 P–B3

14 ..., Kt–Kt3 would be followed by the KRP's march to the sixth, which leads to an easy win, while 14 ..., Kt–Q2 would be met by B–Q5! Black is forced to lose yet another move on defending his Q4 square and the QKtP.

15 QR–K1 B–B4

Now if 15 ..., Kt–Q2; 16 B–R5 would be possible.

16 B×Kt P×B

It appears that Black has found a means of defence. After retiring the Bishop to Kt3 he intends to begin exchanges on the K file.

17 P–KR4

This move places Black in a hopeless position. He has no foothold on the weakened K side; now after 18 B–Q1 White can begin to transfer pieces to that side.

17 ... P–Q4
18 P×P P×P

18 ..., Kt×P; 19 R×R ch and B×Kt leads to the loss of a piece.

19 B–Q1

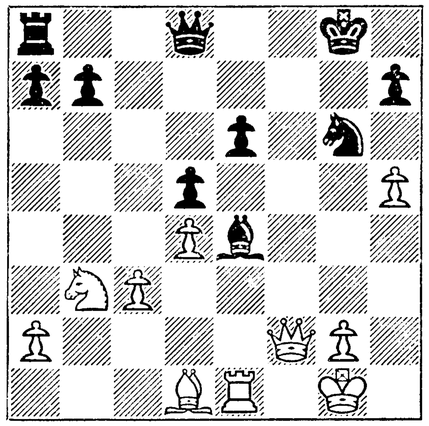
Black's Bishop must move because of the threat of 20 R×Kt.

19 ... B–K5
20 R×P Kt–Kt3
21 Q–KB2 R–K3

The only move, otherwise 22 P–R5 and 23 Kt–B5.

22 R×R P×R
23 P–R5

Position after White's 23rd move



23 Kt–B5 also wins. If Black replies 23 ..., Q×P then 24 Q×Q, Kt×Q; 25 Kt×B, P×Kt; 26 R×P, and 27 R×P, and White has an extra pawn in the endgame. Of course the text move is more energetic.

If Black now plays 23 ..., Kt–R5; 24 Kt–B5, B×KtP; 25 Q–Kt3 ch, he is defenceless. The continuation he chose is no better.

23 ... Kt–B1
24 Q–Kt3 ch K–B2

Of course, not 24 ..., K–R1; 25 Q–K5 ch, and 26 R–K3, with the inevitable 27 R–Kt3 ch.

25 R–B1 ch B–B4
26 Q–B4

All that remains is to break down the last feeble barrier on the KB file.

26 ... Kt–Q2
27 B–B2

Also possible is 27 P–Kt4, Q–R5; 28 Q–R2, Q–Kt4; 29 K–R1. White is suffering from time shortage, and he chooses another way.

27 ... Q–QKt1

No better is 27 ..., Q–B3; 28 Q–B7, Q–K2; 29 B×B, P×B; 30 Q×KtP.

28 Q–R6 Q–Kt1

If 28 ..., Kt–B3; 29 B×B, P×B; 30 R×P, Q–R1; 31 P–Kt4, or 31 Kt–B5, and Black is in a bad way.

29 B×B P×B
30 R×P ch K–K2
31 R–Kt5 Q–K3
32 R–Kt7 ch Resigns

32 ..., K–Q3 is followed by 33 R×Kt ch! After Black accepted the Pawn's sacrifice White's pressure increased gradually but inexorably.

No. 67. *Grünfeld Defence*

8th Game of Match

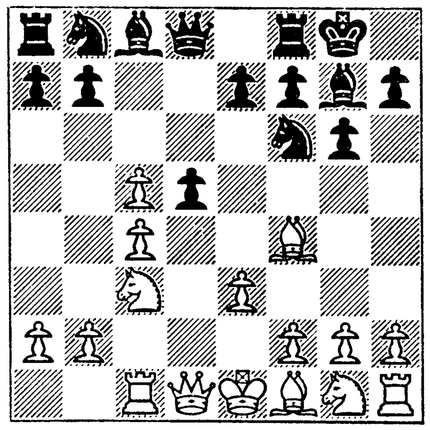
Ragozin (White)	*Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–KKt3
3 Kt–QB3	P–Q4
4 B–B4	B–Kt2
5 P–K3	O–O
6 R–B1	

Capablanca was the originator of this manœuvre (Capablanca–Reshevsky, Amsterdam, 1938). The idea is to make it as difficult as possible for Black to play P–QB4. It was already established that if 6 ..., P–B4; 7 P×P, Q–R4; 8 P×P, R–Q1, with 9 B–B4! White can create great difficulties for Black (9 ..., B–K3; 10 K–K2). Evidently, that was how White intended to continue here; however, a slight disillusionment awaited him.

6 ... P–B4
7 QP×P

When preparing for this game I made a critical study of Reshevsky's play, and after several trials I hit upon this move. Instead of sacrificing the QP, and then recapturing with difficulty, Black defends it in advance. It is not expedient for White to exchange at his Q5, as that surrenders the initiative to Black.

Position after White's 7th move



7 ... B–K3

Black's immediate task is the rapid development of all his forces; this is much more difficult for White.

8 Kt–B3 Kt–B3
9 Q–R4

White forestalls 9 ..., Q–R4 but in doing so loses precious time. Perhaps it would have been better to play 9 B–K2 at once.

Black has completed the development of his minor pieces, and immediately turns to active operations.

9 ... Kt–K5
10 B–K2

White must play with great caution. Bad is 10 Kt×Kt, P×Kt; and then 11 ..., B×KtP; also 10 P×P, Kt×Kt; 11 P×Kt, Q×QP, with the threat of 12 ..., Q×RP. Now

White plans to complete his development, and 10 ..., Kt×Kt; 11 P×Kt, P×P; 12 B×P cannot give Black superiority. How should he continue?

10 ... B×Kt ch

It was difficult to decide on giving up the excellent Bishop, but the possible variations confirm the soundness of the exchange. By destroying the Knight and retaining his own centralized Knight, Black gains a great advantage in the centre, which is bound to influence later events.

11 P×B P×P

As 12 B×P, Kt×P(B5); 13 Q–Kt5, B×B; 14 Q×Kt (14 Q×B, Kt–Q6 ch), Q–Q6; 15 Kt–Kt1, R–Q1 leads to mate, and the B5 pawn cannot be defended, Black has every hope of coming out with an extra pawn. E.g. after 12 O–O, Kt×P(B5); 13 Q–Kt5, Q–R4; 14 B×P, Q×Q; 15 B×Q, B×RP White is a pawn down. Even so, Castling was White's best course.

12 Kt–Q4 B–Q4

The simplest; because of the threat 13 ..., P–K4; 14 Kt×Kt, B×Kt, White must retreat.

13 B–R6 R–K1

Very attractive here is 13 ..., P–K4; 14 Kt×Kt, B×Kt followed by 15 ..., Q–R5; or 13 ..., P–K4; 14 B×R, P×Kt; 15 B–Q6, P–Q6 and 16 ..., P–Q7 ch. But if 13 ..., P–K4 White would reply 14 B×R, P×Kt; 15 BP×P!, Q×B; 16 B×P thus even getting the better game.

14 O–O P–K4
15 Kt–B3

Otherwise 15 ..., Q–R5 follows.

15 ... Kt×P(B5)
16 Q–Kt5 P–Kt3

Black had a choice between the variation 16 ..., Q–R4; 17 B×P, Q×Q; 18 B×Q, B×RP, and the text continuation, which leads to an unexpected sharpening of tension, as White is able to pin Black's pieces on the Q file. However, Black has grown so strong in the centre that he need not be afraid of the pin. Of course 17 B×P is not possible now because of 17 ..., P–R3.

17 KR–Q1

Concerning 17 QR–Q1 see the note to Black's 19th move.

Now Black has no time to play 17 ..., P–K5 because of 18 B×P, and so he first defends the QB5 pawn.

17 ... P–R3
18 Q–Kt1 P–QKt4
19 B–Kt5 Q–Q2

The decisive move! The threat 20 ..., P–K5 is irrefutable. If White himself plays 20 P–K4, then follows 20 ..., B×P, and after 21 R×Q, B×Q; 22 R–Q5 (22 R–B7, B–K5), Kt–K5; 23 R×B, Kt×P(B3) White has lost three pawns; bad also is 21 Q×B, Q×R ch.

So, in retrospect, would it not have been better for White to play 17 R(QB1)–Q1, and then via the variation 17 ..., P–QR3; 18 Q–Kt1, P–QKt4; 19 B–Kt5, Q–Q2; 20 P–K4, B×P; 21 Q×B, Q×R, to continue 22 Q×Kt, Q×B; 23 Q×Kt, perhaps even getting the better game? But this variation would not have arisen. Black would have played 19 ..., P–B3!; 20 B×P, Q×B; 21 R×B, Kt–R5; 22 Q–B2, P–K5; 23 Kt–Q4, Kt–K2; 24 R–Q7, Kt–B4; 25 R–B7, Q–K4, and White loses the exchange.

20 P–QR4 P–K5
21 P×P P×P

To reply to 22 Q×KtP with 22 ..., R–R4.

22 Kt–Q4 Kt×Kt
23 KP×Kt Kt–Kt6

24 Q–B2

24 R–B2 is also hopeless, of course; besides the extra pawn Black has a dominating position. The question involuntarily arises, what was White hoping for? The explanation is quite simple: Black was under acute time pressure. Perhaps he played his next few moves not quite exactly, but he did not let the victory slip out of his hands.

24 ... Kt×R
25 Q×Kt R–R7
26 Q–K3 Q–B3
27 P–R4 P–B3
28 B–R6 R(K1)–R1
29 K–R2 R–Kt7
30 B–Kt4 P–Kt5
31 P×P P–B6
32 R–QB1 P–B7
33 P–B3 R–Kt8
34 P×P B×P
35 P–Q5 Q–Q3 ch

White was reckoning that Black would continue either 35 ..., Q×QP (then 36 R×P, getting rid of that troublesome pawn) or 35 ..., B×QP, which would be followed by 36 Q–K7, B–B2 (36 ..., Q–Kt2; 37 B–K6 ch); 37 B–B3, winning back the exchange and the pawn.

36 B–B4 Q×KtP
37 B–K6 ch

Black also loses after 37 R×P, B×R; 38 Q–K6 ch, K–Kt2; 39 Q–Q7 ch, K–R1; 40 B–R6, R–R8 ch!; 41 K×R, Q–K8 ch; 42 K–R2, Q×RP ch; and 43 ..., Q×B at R6.

37 ... K–R1
38 P–Q6 R×R
39 Q×R Q–Q5
40 P–Q7 B–B3

In this position White sealed 41 P–R5, but he decided not to resume.

A game crammed with interesting variations.

No. 68. *Ruy Lopez*
10th Game of Match

	Ragozin (White)	*Botvinnik* (Black)
1	P–K4	P–K4
2	Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3	B–Kt5	P–QR3
4	B–R4	Kt–B3
5	O–O	B–K2
6	R–K1	P–QKt4
7	B–Kt3	P–Q3
8	P–QB3	O–O
9	P–KR3	Kt–QR4
10	B–B2	P–B4
11	P–Q4	Q–B2
12	QKt–Q2	BP×P
13	P×P	Kt–B3
14	Kt(Q)–KB1	

All this has been met with often enough before. The continuation 14 Kt–Kt3 is admitted to be the best for White. However, he chooses another, long familiar continuation, which was played as long ago as in the Lasker–Tarrasch match, Munich, 1908, and is associated with the sacrifice of the QP.

14 ... P×P
15 B–B4

Recommended by Tartakower. The same move was played in a Kasparian–Panov game (Tbilisi, 1937).

15 ... Q–Kt3
16 P–K5

From this point Black has a good game. One cannot understand why White avoided the plan Kt–Kt3–B5, which Kasparian used successfully in the game already mentioned. The exchange of the KP for the Black pawn on Q3 should have been made only when this forced definite advantages for White. But now Black

has won a pawn without any adverse effects.

16 ... P×P
17 Kt×P B–K3

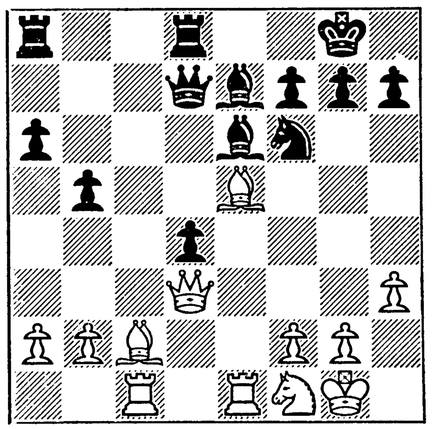
Developing the QB and covering the KB. The QP is invulnerable (18 Kt×Kt, Q×Kt) and because the Bishop at B2 hangs 19 Q×QP is not possible.

18 Kt×Kt Q×Kt
19 B–K5 KR–Q1
20 R–B1 Q–Q2

An attempt to play for a draw with 21 B–B7 is easily refuted: 21 ..., R–K1; 22 B–K5, QR–Q1; 23 B–B7, R–QB1; 24 B–K5, KR–Q1.

21 Q–Q3

Position after White's 21st move



Shrewd, yet surprisingly enough leads to a loss. True, after this move Black had to calculate quite a number of long variations.

21 ... B–B5
22 Q×P

The whole point. White compelled 21 ..., B–B5 by threatening 22 B×Kt, and now he has captured Black's central passed pawn, so restoring equality of material.

22 ... Q×Q
23 B×Q R×B

The only move, leading to retention of his advantage.

24 R×B B×RP

Unexpected, as the Bishop would appear to be shut out of play and caught in a trap. However, Black's pieces manage to come to its rescue in time, and the resulting endgame with an extra pawn is not so difficult technically.

25 P–QKt3 Kt–Q4

25 ..., R–B1; 26 B×RP ch, K–B1; 27 R×R ch, K×R; 28 B–B2 only leads to a draw.

With his next move White must pin the Knight, otherwise 26 ..., Kt–Kt5 will follow, and the Bishop is protected.

26 R–Q7 Kt–B6

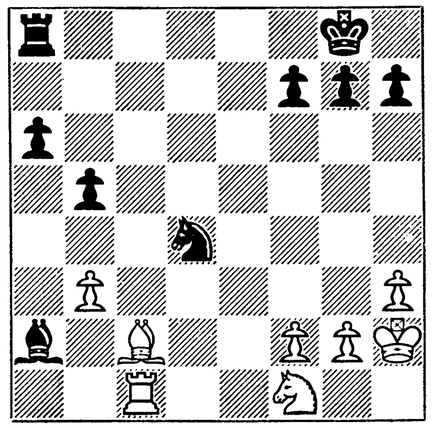
It can be accepted that the first attack on the Bishop has been repulsed!

27 R×R

Otherwise 27 ..., P–Kt5.

27 ... Kt–K7 ch
28 K–R2 Kt×R(Q4)

Position after Black's 28th move



It is now clear that the Bishop is still invulnerable; if 29 Kt–Q2, P–B4; 30 B–Q1, R–K1; 31 R–QR1, R–K8; 32 R×B, R×B White seemingly cannot avoid defeat.

29 B–K4 Kt×KtP

Black's pieces appear to be in a dangerous situation, but it transpires

that White is unable to exploit the circumstance. E.g. 30 R–B3, R–Kt1; 31 B–Q5, P–Kt5; 32 R–B2, B–Kt8; 33 R–Kt2, B–Q6; or 32 R×Kt, B×R; 33 B×B, R–Q1, and in both cases White should lose.

30 R–B7 R–Kt1
31 B–Q5 Kt–B8

If 32 B–K4, then 32 ..., Kt–K7.

32 B–Kt7 B–K3
33 B×P Kt–R7
34 Kt–Q2 Kt–Kt5
35 B–Kt7 Kt–Q4
36 B×Kt B×B
37 P–B4 P–Kt3
38 R–B5 B–R7
39 P–Kt4 P–Kt5
40 R–B2 B–K3

At this point the game was adjourned. White sealed 41 R–Kt2, but did not resume play. Black's pieces co-operated in great harmony.

U.S.S.R. CHAMPIONSHIP

September

No. 69. *King's Indian Defence*

Botvinnik (White)	*Boleslavsky* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–Q3
3 Kt–QB3	P–K4

After a number of games played by Boleslavsky and Bronstein we all know how many finesses are concealed in this opening. But when this game was played (it was my first meeting with Boleslavsky) all one knew was that the Kiev players[1] were fond of playing this defence, and that they had got hold of some new idea or other associated with the later break-through P–Q4.

3 ..., P–K4 has point if Black is aiming at avoiding the variation: 3 ..., P–KKt3; 4 P–K4, B–Kt2; 5 P–B3, O–O; 6 B–K3, P–K4; 7 KKt–K2 (see Game No. 21, *supra*). However, one must point out that since Pirc's innovation in 1939 (7 ..., KP×P!; 8 Kt×P, P–QB3 and then P–Q4) this variation has become less convincing.

The continuation: 4 P×P, P×P; 5 Q×Q ch, K×Q leads to approximate equality. In one Najdorf–Boleslavsky game (Groningen, 1946) Black "had" to make more than one blunder after this Queen exchange, in order to lose the game.

4 Kt–B3 QKt–Q2
5 P–KKt3 P–KKt3
6 B–Kt2 B–Kt2
7 O–O O–O
8 P–K4 R–K1

Black if allowed threatens to seize the initiative with 9 ..., P×P; 10 Kt×P, P–B3 (or first Kt–B4) followed by P–Q4. At the board I could not find a sound continuation and decided to liquidate this threat by resort to the most radical method (see Game No. 72, *infra*, note to White's 9th).

9 P–Q5 Kt–B4
10 Kt–K1 P–QR4
11 P–KR3 R–B1
12 B–K3

Of course, if White played at once 12 Kt–Q3, it would be met by 12 ..., Kt×Kt, and then Black's second Knight would be transferred via Q2–B4 to an excellent position. Perhaps, for this reason even now the better move would have been 12 ..., KKt–Q2, but Boleslavsky did not want to close the QB1–KR6 diagonal.

[1] Boleslavsky is an Ukrainian. S.G.

12 ... Kt–K1
13 Kt–Q3

White aims at once to exploit a convenient opportunity to propose a Knight exchange. However, the move 13 P–B4 invited itself, and after 13 ..., P–B4; 14 KP×P, Kt×P; 15 P×P, B×P White would have had the initiative.

13 ... P–Kt3
14 Q–Q2

Now 14 P–B4 is no longer convincing because of 14 ..., KP×P; 15 P×P, P–B4! with great complications.

14 ... P–B4
15 P×P P×P!

Perfectly sound. In an analogous position a Flohr–Lilienthal game played at Moscow in 1936 demonstrated that 15 ..., B×P; 16 Kt×Kt, QP×Kt; 17 P–KKt4! is in White's favour.

16 P–B4 Kt×Kt

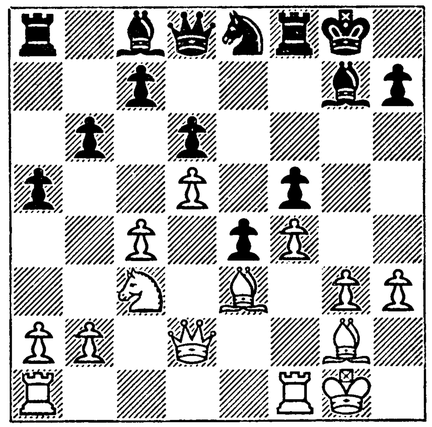
Boleslavsky is playing very thoughtfully, if not too much so! Evidently he was afraid that 16 ..., P–K5 would be followed by 17 Kt–B2! with the possible threat of P–KKt4. However, in this continuation Black would retain his Knight on B4, while in all probability he could prevent the advance of the KKtP.

17 Q×Kt P–K5
18 Q–Q2

All the commentators estimated the position here as in Black's favour; in my view this was due to a misapprehension.

On the Q side, where White can initiate a pawn advance with P–QR3, P–QKt4–Kt5, his superiority is obvious. Black's passed pawn at K5 brings Black no advantage whatever while so many minor pieces are left on the board, and his only comfort is the weakness of the White KKtP. However, this weakness is only apparent, for Black's minor pieces cannot attack it.

Position after White's 18th move



18 ... Q–B3
19 R–B2 B–Q2
20 R–Q1 Q–Kt3
21 Kt–K2 Kt–B3
22 B–Q4 QR–K1
23 Q–K3 P–R3
24 Kt–B3 R–B2
25 B–B1 K–R2
26 B–K2 P–R4

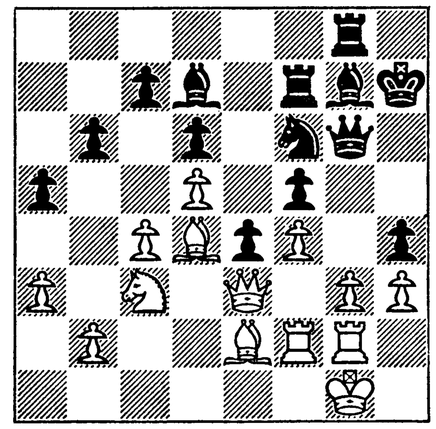
All these manœuvres are easy to understand. White has disposed his Bishops to the best advantage and has blocked the K5 pawn; now he has only to place his Rooks so as to secure the K side. Black is preparing to double his Rooks on the KKt file.

27 R–Kt2 B–R3
28 R–KB1 R–KKt1
29 R(B1)–B2 B–Kt2
30 P–R3 P–KR5

An unfortunate idea. Boleslavsky, evidently a little perturbed by White's slow manœuvres, was under the impression that he had the better game. He was afraid of being too late with this break-through; and "supposing White suddenly decided to close the position with P–KR4 . . .?" Of course, the sound continuation was B–KB1–K2 followed by KR–Kt2 and Q–R3, though I think that even then White was left with

the greater possibilities. Now White is the first to gather the fruits of opening the game on the K side.

Position after Black's 30th move



31 P×P Q–R3
32 R–Kt5 Q×P
33 R(B2)–Kt2 B–K1

The only defence. As soon as White's second Rook reached the KKt file a threat of capturing the Queen arose: 34 B×Kt, R×B; 35 R–R5 ch.

34 R×P B–R3
35 R(B)–Kt5

The simplest. In the last resort White retains superiority in material with a crushing position.

35 ... B×R
36 P×B Kt–R4

Hopeless, too, is 36 ..., Kt–Q2, if only because of 37 R–Kt4, Q–K8 ch; 38 K–Kt2, or 37 Kt×P, followed by 38 B–Q3.

37 B×Kt Q×B
38 Q×P ch R–Kt3

Of course, not 38 ..., Q–Kt3; 39 Q–R4 ch, with mate next move.

39 Q×B

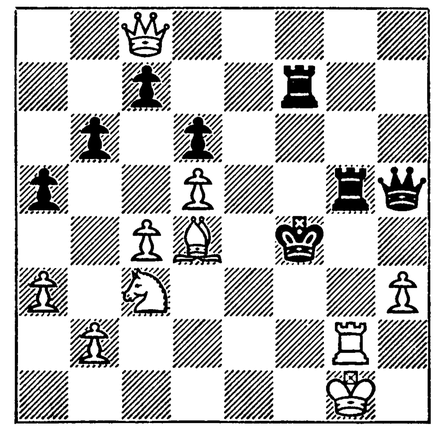
Simpler is 39 R–Kt4, K–Kt1; 40 Q×B ch, R–B1; 41 Q–K3.

39 ... R×P!
40 Q–R8 ch K–Kt3
41 Q–Kt8 ch K–B4

At this point White sealed his move. His superiority is great, but the finish was not without interest.

42 Q–B8 ch K–B5

Position after Black's 42nd move



If 42 ..., K–Kt3; 43 Q–K6 ch, K–R2; 44 R–Kt4!! (44 Q×R ch, Q×Q; 45 R×R leads to technical difficulties because of the open position of White's King), R×R (45 Kt–K4 threatened. But if 44 ..., R–B8 ch; then 45 K×R!, Q×P ch; 46 K–K1, Q×R; 47 Q–B7 ch, K–R3; 48 B–K3, and White has an extra piece); 45 P×R, Q–Kt3; 46 Kt–K4! the result of the game is decided at once.

43 Q–K6

An amusing move. Despite the exposed position of White's King, he succeeds in avoiding perpetual check, whereas it is impossible to save the Black King from attack.

43 ... R×R ch
44 K×R Q–B6 ch
45 K–Kt1 Q–Kt6 ch

Or 45 ..., R–B1; 46 Kt–K2 ch, K–Kt4; 47 B–K3 ch.

46 K–B1 Q–B6 ch
47 B–B2 Q–R4

No different result follows from 47 ..., R–B1; 48 Q–R6 ch, K–K4; 49 Q–Kt5 ch, Q–B4; 50 Q–K7 ch, K–B5; 51 Q–K3, mate.

48 Kt–K2 ch K–Kt4
49 P–R4 ch Resigns

No. 70. *English Opening*

Botvinnik (White)	*Levenfish* (Black)
1 P–QB4	P–K4
2 Kt–QB3	Kt–KB3
3 Kt–B3	Kt–B3
4 P–Q4	P×P
5 Kt×P	B–Kt5
6 B–Kt5	P–KR3
7 B–R4	B×Kt ch

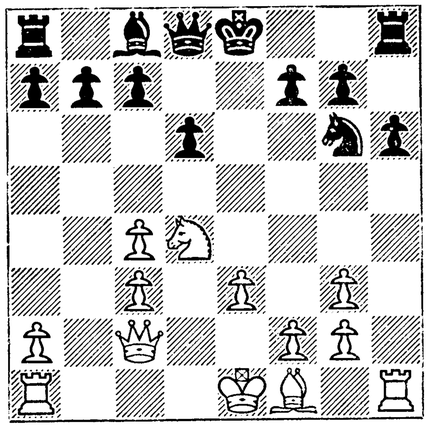
This exchange, in conjunction with the later Knight manœuvre Kt–K4–Kt3, was played by Nenarokov as long ago as 1933, against me (Leningrad Masters' Tournament). By so playing Black succeeds in exchanging off the Bishop at R4.

8 P×B	Kt–K4
9 P–K3	Kt–Kt3
10 B–Kt3	Kt–K5

Black has gained his end: the Bishop exchange is unavoidable.

11 Q–B2	Kt×B
12 RP×Kt	P–Q3

Position after Black's 12th move



In this position, against Nenarokov I played 13 R–Q1, and after 13 ..., Q–K2 continued 14 B–K2. Later Nenarokov allowed the pawn advance: P–K4 and P–B4, and found himself in a difficult situation owing to the awkward position of his Knight at Kt3. During analysis of my game with Nenarokov I came to the conclusion that it is simplest of all for White to play 13 P–B4 at once, depriving Black's Knight of his square at K4.

13 P–KB4!	Q–K2

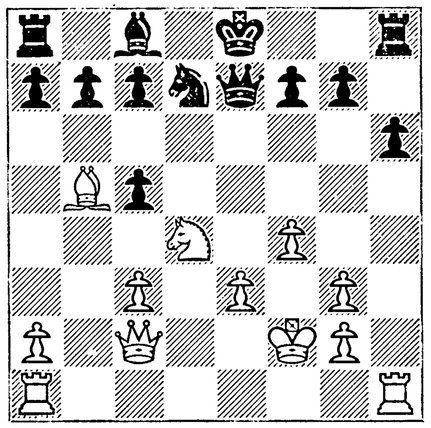
This move is pointless, as White was intending to transfer the King to KB2 in any case.

14 K–B2	Kt–B1

Of course, it is tempting to transfer the Knight to QB5, but this move to B1 gives White the possibility of striking an unexpected combinational blow. In 1933, when commentating my game with Nenarokov in the periodical *Shakhmati V S.S.S.R.* (*Chess in the U.S.S.R.*) after the moves 13 R–Q1, Q–K2; 14 B–K2, I wrote: "There is nothing in the inviting pawn sacrifice: 14 P–B5, P×P; 15 B–Kt5 ch, K–B1; 16 Kt–B3, B–K3." In the present position K–B1 is impossible, as B1 is occupied by the Knight. So the pawn sacrifice is perfectly sound.

15 P–QB5	P×P
16 B–Kt5 ch	Kt–Q2

Position after Black's 16th move



This leads to a completely lost position. True, Black's situation cannot be regarded as entirely satisfactory in any case. For instance:

(1) 16 ..., P–B3; 17 Kt×P.

(2) 16 ..., K–Q1; 17 QR–Q1, P×Kt; 18 R×P ch, B–Q2; 19 B×B, Kt×B; 20 KR–Q1, K–B1; 21 R×Kt, Q×R; 22 R×Q, K×R; 23 Q–B5 ch, K–K2; 24 Q–K5 ch, K–B1; 25 Q×BP, and White has every reason to count on the win, as the Black Rooks are separated.

(3) 16 ..., B–Q2; 17 Kt–B5, Q–B3; 18 Q–K4 ch, Kt–K3 (18 ..., K–Q1; 19 KR–Q1, P–B3; 20 R–Q6); 19 B×B ch, K×B; 20 KR–Q1 ch, K–B1; 21 QR–Kt1, QR–Kt1; 22 Q–R4, KR–Q1 (22 ..., R–QR1; 23 Q–Q7 ch, K–Kt1; 24 R×KtP ch); 23 R×R ch, Kt×R; 24 R–Q1, Q×Kt; 25 Q–K8.

17 Kt–B5	Q–B3
18 QR–Q1	P–KKt3

The only possibility. Black gets a momentary breathing-space. Entirely bad is 18 ..., P–R3; 19 Q–K4 ch, K–Q1; 20 B×Kt, B×B; 21 Q×KtP, R–B1; 22 R×B ch.

19 Kt×P	R–B1

Defending the KBP and removing the Rook to a safer position. If 19 ..., Q–K3 White wins at once with 20 Kt×P (20 ..., R×R; 21 Kt–Kt5).

20 P–Kt4	

Black's position is lost, as White will be able to fix the weakness of his KB3 square.

20 ...	P–R3
21 P–Kt5	Q–K3
22 B–K2	Kt–Kt3
23 Kt–Kt4	K–K2
24 Kt–B6	Q–B3
25 R–R7	

Probably 25 P–Kt4 is stronger.

25 ...	B–B4

The KKtP should not have been defended.

26 P–K4	B–K3

26 ..., B–Q2 would be better, but it would only drag out a game which has gone so unsatisfactorily for Black.

27 P–B5	Resigns

No. 71. *French Defence*

V. Panov (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K3
2 P–Q3	

This move has a simple explanation: To begin with, White wants to avoid the prepared variations, and, secondly, he wants to transpose the game to the King's Indian Defence (with colours reversed) of which he is a great devotee.

Generally speaking, in such continuations White does not attempt to exploit the advantage of first move and concentrates on the middle-game. This is Master V. Panov's aim: he is one of those players who readily go in for any complications (even disadvantageous ones) in the confidence that in such positions he is bound to outplay his opponent!

2 ...	P–QB4
3 Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
4 QKt–Q2	P–Q4
5 B–K2	

This play in the style of Philidor's Defence is rejected by modern masters. It is now well known that the fianchetto development of the KB is fundamental to the King's Indian Defence.

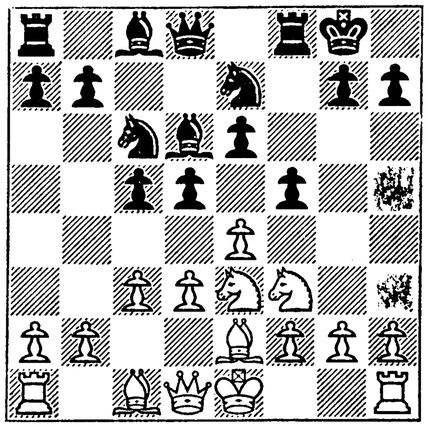
5 ...	B–Q3
6 P–B3	KKt–K2
7 Kt–KB1	

Evidently White has come to the conclusion that the game is developing too "normally," without difficulties for either side. So to begin with he decides to create difficulties for himself. This is the

only possible explanation of the extravagant manœuvre which he is contemplating. He should have continued 7 P–Q4.

7 ... O–O
8 Kt–K3 P–B4

Position after Black's 8th move



It transpires that the manœuvre Kt–KB1–K3 only helps Black to advance P–B4–B5 and to take the initiative; however, this does not disturb White; he has deliberately gone in for this continuation.

If during the game Panov had guessed that his strivings to depart from the thoroughly studied variations were all for nothing, and that Black was simply following Capablanca in his game with Nimzovitch (Nimzovitch–Capablanca, San-Sebastian, 1911) he would have been in despair! We note only that Nimzovitch did not embark on the manœuvre Kt–KB1–K3!

9 P×QP P×P
10 P–KKt3!

White has decided that the complications are now entered upon and he must play with all his might. He has in mind Kt–Kt2, followed by B–B4×B in order to weaken the black squares on Black's side. So Black is bound to advance the KBP farther, and the "battle" of the middle-game is joined.

Nothing good comes of 10 P–Q4, P–B5; 11 P–QKt3, P–B5; 12 Kt–B2, P–QKt4; 13 P–QR4, Kt–R4.

10 ... P–KB5
11 Kt–Kt2 Kt–Kt3
12 Q–Kt3

A cunning psychological sally. Of course, White had no doubt that Black would sacrifice the KtP, and the extra pawn would give him some compensation for the Black attack. One could have replied 12 ..., B–B2, but Black prefers to accept White's challenge and pass immediately to active operations.

12 ... B–K3
13 Kt×P

The immediate 13 Q×KtP, Kt–R4; 14 Q–R6, B–B1; 15 Q–Kt5, B–Q2; 16 Q–R6, R–B3 is altogether bad! With exchanges at B4 White recovers to some extent from his backward development and effects a weakening of the Black QBP.

13 ... Kt×Kt
14 B×Kt B×B
15 P×B R×P
16 Q×KtP

White has no choice, he must take the pawn, for otherwise Black continues 16 ..., P–QKt3, or 16 ..., B–Kt5, or even 16 ..., Q–B3, retaining the initiative with equality in material. Now Black must play very exactly, as after any simplification White's extra pawn is a weighty factor.

16 ... Kt–R4
17 Q–R6 B–B1!
18 Q–Kt5 B–Kt5
19 Kt–Kt1

Forced. Of course, such "manœuvres" do not make for activity among White's pieces; his Queen remains in a dangerous position.

19 ... Q–B2

Now Panov discovers an ingenious

way of complicating Black's task, and avoids the threats to his Queen arising from both 20 ..., R–Kt1; 21 Q–R6, B–B1 and 20 ..., P–QR3! winning the queen in either case.

20 P–Kt4! Kt–Kt2

Of course, not 20 ..., P×P; 21 Q×P ch, and 22 Q×R ch.

21 P×P Kt–Q3!

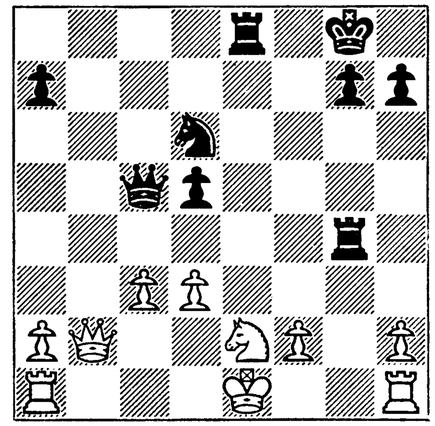
A fitting reply! Bad for Black is 21 ..., Kt×P; 22 P–Q4! Now 22 P×Kt is impossible because of 22 ..., Q×P ch and 23 ..., Q×R ch. As White must defend the KBP he can retire his Queen only to QKt2.

22 Q–Kt2 Q×P
23 B×B

Both now and later P–Q4 leads to a permanent weakness on QB4.

23 ... R×B
24 Kt–K2 R–K1!

Position after Black's 24th move



A not very striking, yet probably decisive move. Now White is bound to determine his King's position and to Castle long. In this case the open QKt file guarantees Black speedy success!

25 O–O–O P–QR4

So far Black had played irreproachably, but when he had only to inflict the final blow he did not discover the simplest method. If my memory does not betray me, I rejected 25 ..., R–K2! to be followed by 26 ..., R–Kt2, because of 26 Kt–Q4 (26 Q–Kt8 ch, K–B2), R–Kt2; 27 Kt–Kt3, overlooking the fact that White could not play 26 Kt–Q4 because of 26 ..., R×Kt. (Unfortunately, in the Twelfth U.S.S.R. Championship my play was marred by a number of such oversights). So I decided to mobilize the QRP also, in order to prevent the Knight transfer to White's QKt3, and also if occasion offered to seize his QKt2 square.

I must further point out that any delay in attacking (e.g. 25 ..., Q×KBP; 26 Kt–Q4) fundamentally eases White's situation.

26 K–Kt1

Avoiding the variation 26 ..., R–Kt5; 27 Q–B2, R×Kt; 28 Q×R, Q×BP ch; 29 Q–B2, Q–R6 ch; 30 K–Q2, R–Kt7; simultaneously White prepares Kt–Q4.

26 ... P–R5

An unpleasant pawn for White: 27 K–R1 is met by 27 ..., P–R6; 28 ..., R×Kt and 29 ..., Q×P ch.

27 Kt–Q4 R–K2!

Delayed by two moves, this Rook manœuvre none the less is decisive, as now also, because of the variation 28 K–R1, R–Kt2; 29 Q–Q2 (29 Kt–K6, Q–B1! winning a piece), R×Kt! the White King cannot find safety in the corner of the board.

However, Panov devises an extraordinary combination which all but saves the game.

28 P–B3

A necessary preliminary move, as White needs the KKt file.

28 ... R–R5
29 KR–K1

Brilliant, though, alas, mistaken. As in any case there was no defence,

White has had to decide on the Queen sacrifice.

29 ... R–Kt2
30 R–K8 ch! K–B2

Black has no choice, as 30 ..., Kt×R is met by 31 Q×R.

31 R–B8 ch!

Now Black must play very carefully: 31 ..., K×R is followed by 32 Kt–K6 ch, while after 31 ..., K–Kt3; 32 R–Kt1 ch, K–R4; 33 Q×R!!, Kt×Q; 34 R–B5 ch, K–R3; 35 R–B6 ch!!, P×R (or 35 ..., P–Kt3); 36 Kt–B5 ch, K–R4; 37 Kt–Kt7 ch, White forces a draw with perpetual check. A good idea!

31 ... K–K2!

The only move; 32 Kt–B5 ch, is now without danger for Black; 32 ..., Kt×Kt; 33 Q×R ch, K×R.

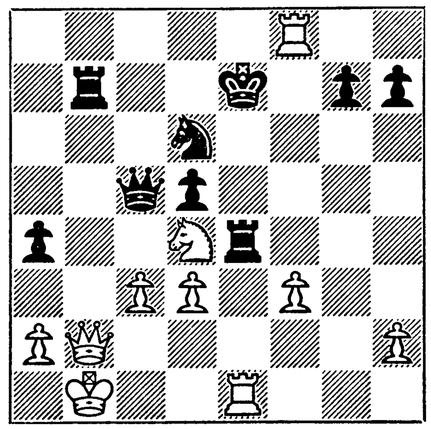
White also has one move left.

32 R–K1 ch R–K5!!

Fine, though rather cruel. Of course, if 32 ..., K–Q2; 33 R–B7 ch! White wins.

White's pieces are disunited, and he is in a helpless situation. The only explanation of his further resistance is that he was slow in recovering from this unexpected overthrow of all his combination.

Position after Black's 32nd move



33 BP×R R×Q ch
34 K×R Q–Kt3 ch
35 K–B2 K×R
36 P×P Kt–Kt4
37 R–B1 ch K–K1
38 Kt–K6 Kt–R6 ch
39 K–Q1 Q–Kt8 ch
40 K–K2 Q–Kt7 ch
41 K–K3 Q×BP

White resigns. In this game Panov clearly aimed at complicating the struggle, but, sowing the wind, he reaped the whirlwind!

NINETEEN FORTY-ONE

During the first two months of 1941 I trained intensively for the match-tournament for the title of Absolute Champion of the U.S.S.R.[1] It has to be said that after my lack of success in the U.S.S.R. Championship held the previous year certain "experts" were quite prepared to relegate me to the "has-beens," maybe they even succeeded in convincing me that it was so! But the attraction of becoming absolute champion (i.e. a match champion) was so great that I decided none the less to "try my luck."

In my training I was given invaluable assistance by Ragozin, with whom I have been in joint training since at least 1936. This time, in addition to training games and joint analysis, we also practised to accustom me to specific tournament conditions. For instance, in the Twelfth Championship

[1] See *Championship Chess*, by M. Botvinnik (London and U.S.A., 1950).

Tournament I had suffered through not being used to tobacco smoke, so we had to resort to "radical" treatment: during our training games Ragozin "smoked" me for five hours in succession. Naturally, I soon got used to tobacco.

In the match-tournament the struggle was extremely tense. But this time I was in good form, and the defeat which I managed to inflict on Keres in the third round (Game No. 73, *infra*) played a great part in the results. My victory in the match-tournament ranks as one of the best achievements in all my chess career.

When the Great Patriotic War began the need for defence of the Motherland called for the application of my powers in a different field.

MATCH-TOURNAMENT FOR THE TITLE OF ABSOLUTE CHAMPION OF THE U.S.S.R.

March–April

No. 72. *King's Indian Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White) — *A. Lilienthal* (Black)

1 P–Q4 Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–KKt3
3 Kt–QB3 B–Kt2
4 Kt–B3 P–Q3
5 P–KKt3 QKt–Q2
6 B–Kt2 O–O
7 O–O P–K4
8 P–K4 R–K1
9 B–K3

This move presents Black with a difficult problem. It will be fully appreciated only by those devoted to the King's Indian Defence. The point is that of recent years a system of play was found for Black (KP×P, P–B3, and P–Q4). With 9 B–K3 this is hardly practicable.

So Black has to think of something different.

9 ... P×P

It is doubtful whether the continuation 9 ..., Kt–Kt5; 10 B–Kt5, P–KB3; 11 B–B1 improves Black's position at all.

10 Kt×P Kt–K4
11 P–Kt3 Kt(B)–Kt5

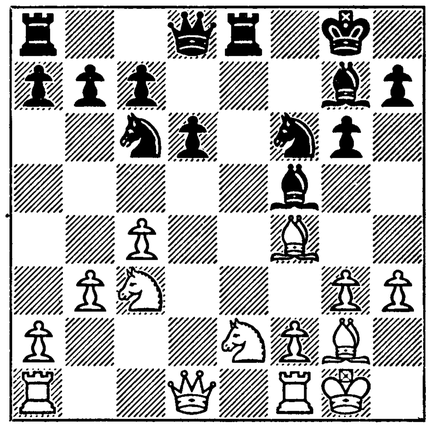
Temporarily Black has the initiative. But the position of his pieces in the centre is insecure, while White's central pawn at K4 cramps Black's play.

12 B–B4 Kt–QB3
13 Kt(Q)–K2 P–B4

Black gets rid of the K-pawn, but White's pawn superiority developing on the K side gives him good chances.

14 P–KR3 Kt–B3
15 P×P B×P

Position after Black's 15th move



16 Q–Q2

Inconsistent. After the simple 16 P–KKt4 White's superiority would have been unquestionable. In the event of 16 P–KKt4, Kt×P; 17 P×Kt, B×P, White would, of course, have had to go over temporarily to the defence, but gradually

his material advantage would have told.

16 ... P–KR4

Of course!

17 QR–K1 Q–Q2
18 K–R2 K–R2

Not 18 ..., Kt–K5 because of 19 Q–Q5 ch.

19 B–Kt5 Kt–K4

Black's situation is not easy and he seeks counter-play.

19 ..., Kt–K5, is not good. 20 Kt×Kt, B×Kt; 21 P–B3, B–B4; 22 P–KKt4, B–K3; 23 Kt–B4. However, even after 19 ..., Kt–K4; 20 Kt–Q4 Black would be in a difficult situation; in the variation 20 ..., B–Q6; 21 R–KKt1, Kt(B)–Kt5 ch; 22 K–R1! (but not 22 P×Kt, Kt×P ch; 23 K–R1, B×Kt) his minor pieces are insecurely placed.

But after White's weaker reply the direct threat to Black is eliminated.

20 Kt–B4 P–B3
21 B×Kt B×B
22 Kt–K4 B–K2

After 22 ..., B×Kt; 23 B×B, K–Kt2 White would have somewhat the better position because of the weakness of the Black KKtP.

23 Q–B3 Q–B2
24 Kt–K2

White transfers the Knight to Q4 in order to force the exchange of Black's Bishop.

Now Black could make his defence easier by 24 ..., B×Kt; 25 B×B, B–B3; 26 Q–B2, Q–B2.

24 ... QR–Q1

Offers White new chances.

25 P–B4 Kt–B2
26 Kt–Q4 Kt–R3

The correct move is 26 ..., Q–B1; after 27 Kt×B, Q×Kt; 28 Kt–Kt5 ch, B×Kt; 29 P×B, Q–Q2, followed by Kt–K4 Black's position is defensible.

Black's last slip leads immediately to the showdown!

27 Kt–Kt5 ch

Black resigns, for after 27 ..., B×Kt; 28 P×B, Kt–B2; 29 Kt×B, White wins a pawn and launches a very strong attack.

No. 73. *Nimzo-Indian Defence*

P. Keres (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4 Q–B2	P–Q4

This move is not in harmony with the main idea of this defence: struggle for the centre with pieces. But, since White has made the unenterprising 4 Q–B2 and temporarily left the QP without defence, 4 P–Q4, initiating energetic play in the centre, is entirely justified.

5 P×P P×P
6 B–Kt5 P–KR3
7 B–R4

Of course White tries to keep the Knight pinned, but after this move he cannot avoid a sharp struggle.

7 ... P–B4

Perfectly logical. Black exploits the temporary weakness of White's Q4 in order to seize the initiative.

I thought of this move during a game with Kotov (Moscow, 1940) and I employed it then, mainly to avoid the awkward variations associated with 7 ..., B–K3. Several rounds later in the same tournament I employed 7 ..., P–B4 against Mikenas. He replied 8 O–O–O,

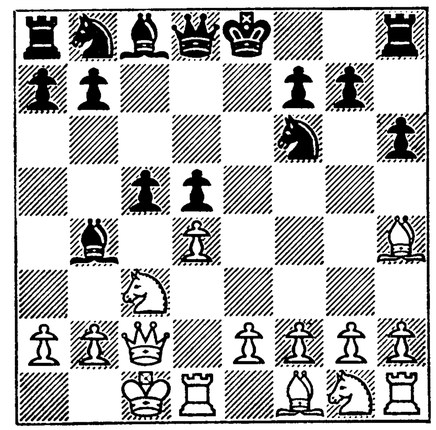
came out of the opening with the better game, and, after mistakes on both sides, gained the victory.

Keres, evidently, was impressed by my game with Mikenas and without much hesitation castled QR. It is worth adding that Ragozin reminded me that he and I had analyzed the move 7 ..., P–B4 as long ago as 1936, and I had then convincingly refuted it! To my regret, I forgot the refutation.

More recently I discovered that I employed the P–B4 move as long ago as 1931 (Lebediev–Botvinnik game, semi-final of Soviet Championship, Moscow, 1931), but without the preceding P–KR3.

8 O–O–O

Position after White's 8th move



This apparently strong move leads to defeat. In reality, with an undeveloped K side, to expose the King to the possibility of a direct attack by Black's pieces from the front (the B file) as well as from the flank (the diagonal QKt1–KR7) is, to say the least, risky!

Against Mikenas I continued 8 ..., O–O without any worthwhile result.

In November–December, 1940, I discovered the best course for Black. Great was my chagrin when in one of the January issues of "64" (1941) I saw the Belavenietz–Simagin game, in which Simagin made the first two moves of the correct plan! Keres did not notice this game, or he would of course have seen the light! So I was able to employ the prepared variation after all.

8 ... B×Kt

The QKt is enemy No. 1. It has to be destroyed in order to secure the centre, and also to open up the QB file.

9 Q×B

9 B×Kt, Q×B; 10 Q×B, Kt–B3 also retained the initiative for Black, but this is the very continuation White should have chosen.

9 ... P–KKt4

While the White Knight had to be eliminated, I had to preserve my own Knight to protect the centre. The weakening of the pawn formation is of no great significance. Events develop with such speed that time is of prime importance. White's immobilized pieces on the K side have no time to come to their King's aid.

10 B–Kt3 P×P

This move suggests itself. The QB file must be opened up. In the above-mentioned game with Belavenietz, Simagin continued 10 ..., Kt–K5, which is contrary to the correct plan of attack.

11 Q×P Kt–B3
12 Q–QR4

In the given situation this is, probably, even better than withdrawing the Queen. White, by pinning the Knight, artificially closes the B file and tries to compel Black to lose a tempo in freeing the Knight.

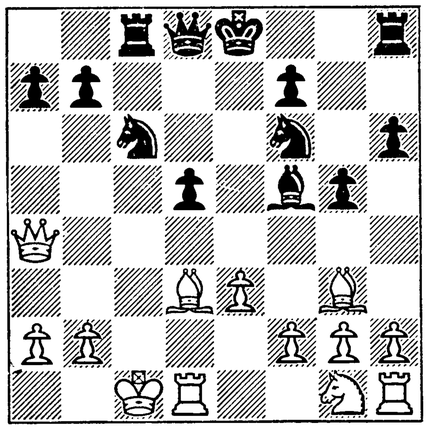
12 ... B–B4

And so White's QKt1–R7 diagonal is occupied. Now Black merely has to occupy the B file. Which is more

dangerous, which should be parried first?

13 P–K3 R–QB1
14 B–Q3

Position after White's 14th move



Keres tries to secure the King's retreat and closes the diagonal, an imperceptible mistake leading immediately to disaster.

A better plan would have been to bring up the Knight to close the B file. In all fairness it must be said that even after 14 Kt–K2, P–R3; 15 Kt–B3, P–Kt4; 16 Q×RP, P–Kt5; 17 B–Kt5, B–Q2 Black would have the advantage.

14 ... Q–Q2

With the serious threat of a discovered check. White has no choice.

15 K–Kt1 B×B ch
16 R×B Q–B4

This pin can be broken only at the cost of material.

17 P–K4 Kt×P
18 K–R1 O–O

18 ..., Kt–B4 would be followed by a check saving the Rook (19 R–K3 ch).

19 R–Q1 P–Kt4

The thrust that crowns the attack. The Black Knight secures Q5, which leads immediately to mate.

20 Q×KtP Kt–Q5
21 Q–Q3 Kt–B7 ch
22 K–Kt1 Kt–Kt5
Resigns.

White's K-side pieces took no part in the game.

No. 74. *French Defence*

V. Smyslov (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K3
2 P–Q4	P–Q4
3 Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4 P–K5	P–QB4
5 P–QR3	B×Kt ch
6 P×B	Kt–K2
7 Kt–B3	QKt–B3
8 B–Q3	

8 P–QR4 is recognized as more subtle.

8 ... Q–R4
9 Q–Q2 P–B5
10 B–K2 Q–R5

This is as in the Pogrebyssky–Botvinnik game (Leningrad, 1939: No. 63, *supra*). Smyslov went in for this variation to try out a new idea—an immediate pawn attack on the K side. However, even in this case Black probably has equal chances.

11 P–R4 B–Q2
12 P–R5 P–KR3
13 Kt–R4

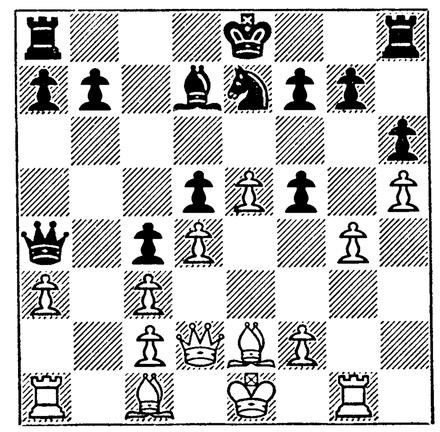
The correct approach is first P–Kt4 and then Kt–R4. With the exchange of Knights White's chances of success decrease.

13 ... Kt–B4
14 Kt×Kt

This is entirely inconsistent, since the Black Bishop now comes into play. White hopes to open up the position with P–Kt4 (after the Black pawn reaches B4), but it does not lead to his advantage. It was still not too late to play 14 Kt–B3 followed by 15 P–Kt4.

14 ... P×Kt
15 KR–Kt1 Kt–K2
16 P–Kt4

Position after White's 16th move



A cursory glance at the board is sufficient to reveal the weak features of White's position: his Bishops are inactive, and Black will get a good base at KB4 for his pieces. Also, one should not lose sight of the organic defect of White's pawn formation—his Q side can keep in touch with the K side only via QB1.

If Black continued 16 ..., P–KKt4, then after 17 P×P e.p., P(2)×P; 18 P×P, B×P, he would have an excellent position.

16 ... P×P
17 B×P B×B

In one move Black loses all his advantage! Even now 17 ..., B–B4 with the better game, was not too late.

The White Rook should not have been allowed to reach the fourth rank. Because of this "trifle" the entire picture changes.

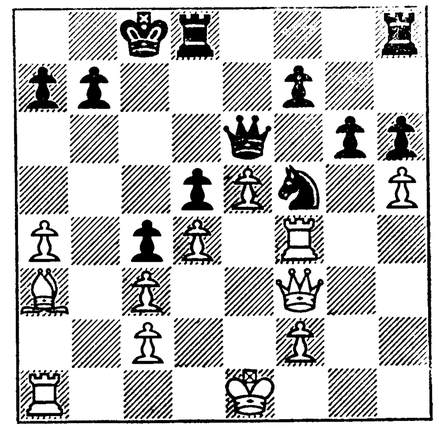
18 R×B Kt–B4
19 Q–K2 Q–Q2
20 R–B4 Q–K3

Alas! Black cannot force the exchange of White's KRP by 20 ..., P–KKt4; 21 P×P e.p., P×P, which would lead to a won position for Black (the passed pawn on the R file and the strong Knight at B4), because of 21 P–K6, and White wins a piece.

Since Black does not succeed in exchanging his BP for the RP, the position of the Knight at B4 proves to be not so impregnable as might appear, for the Knight cannot be defended by the Rook.

21 Q–B3 P–KKt3
22 P–R4 O–O–O
23 B–R3

Position after White's 23rd move



Now Black cannot initiate any aggressive action, as he continually has to reckon with the threat K–Q2, R–KKt1, P×P, R×P, and R×Kt. Black always has to be ready to lose the exchange and so he cannot even think of aggressive play. On the other hand, if he puts up a sound defence the loss of exchange leads to double-edged play—it is not always favourable for White.

Here Black offered a draw, which White declined.

23 ... P–Kt3
24 K–Q2 KR–Kt1
25 R–QKt1 K–Kt2
26 P–R5 R–QB1
27 QRP×P RP×P
28 Q–Kt4

White does not notice the above-indicated Rook sacrifice at KKt6 and undertakes an unnecessary and cumbersome shift of the Queen's Rook to B3 (in order to threaten the same sacrifice of the exchange!).

28 ... K–B3
29 R–KR1 K–Q2

Otherwise 30 P×P, P×P; 31 R×P.

30 R–R3 QR–K1
31 R(R)–B3 K–B2
32 Q–R3

Of course, the Rook sacrifice involves some risk: after 32 P×P, P×P; 33 R×Kt, P×R; 34 Q×P, R–Kt2; 35 Q×Q, R×Q, the endgame is very complicated. So White evidently makes a routine decision: to draw the game out to the 40th move and the adjournment in order to analyse the endgame at leisure.

32 ... R–Kt2
33 Q–R1 R–QR1
34 Q–QB1

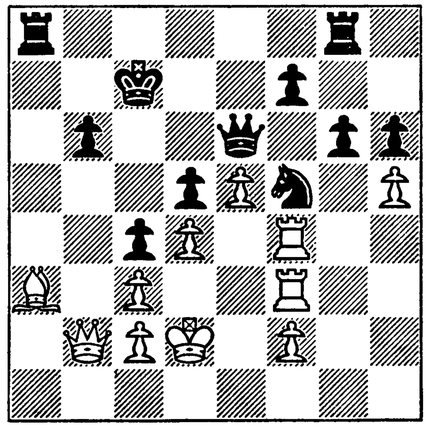
Useless. The Queen is needed on the K side.

34 ... R(Kt)–Kt1
35 Q–Kt2

White feels so confident that unwittingly he makes a losing move.

Now Black exploits the unhappy position of the White Queen and with the tempi thus gained transfers his Rooks to the 8th rank to carry out a mating attack. Meanwhile White's Rooks play a sorry role.

Position after White's 35th move



35 ... R–R5

Firmly tying down the Queen to the Bishop (if the Bishop remains where it is).

36 B–Q6 ch

The continuation 36 Q–B1, R(Kt)–QR1; 37 B–Kt2, R–R7 would not help White, if only because of the possible manœuvre: Q–Q2–Kt4.

36 ... K–B3
37 Q–Kt1 R(Kt)–QR1
38 Q–KR1 R–R8
39 Q–R3 R–KKt8

There is no satisfactory defence against the threat R(R)–R8, R(Kt)–K8 and R(R)–Q8 mate.

40 P×P R(R)–R8
41 R–K3 R(R)–Q8 ch
42 K–K2 Kt×P ch
Resigns.

No. 75. *French Defence*

I. Bondarevsky (White) — *M. Botvinnik* (Black)

1 P–K4 P–K3
2 P–Q4 P–Q4
3 P–K5

Probably the oldest variation of the French Defence. It was dropped because it was obvious that White has difficulty in retaining the pawn centre. In the second and third decade of this century Nimzovitch revived the variation. He did not hold the centre with pawns, but defended it with pieces, readily exchanging off the central Q and K pawns.

After one of the games in the

Levenfish–Botvinnik match (1937) in which Black succeeded in evolving a satisfactory defence system, the move 3 P–K5 has rarely been met with in tournaments. Bondarevsky did not know that 1937 game, and so this present game is not of much value from the aspect of opening theory.

3 ... P–QB4
4 Kt–KB3

Nimzovitch's system. White avoids P–QB3.

4 ... Kt–QB3
5 B–Q3

The continuation 5 P×P, B×P would assist Black's development. So White sacrifices the pawn, hoping to recover it later and simultaneously capture the central Q4 with his pieces.

5 ... P×P
6 O–O B–B4

This makes it difficult for White to recover the pawn and easier for Black to mobilize his forces.

7 P–QR3

This move would be to the point if White continued with P–QKt4. But he rejects this move, in order not to weaken his Q side.

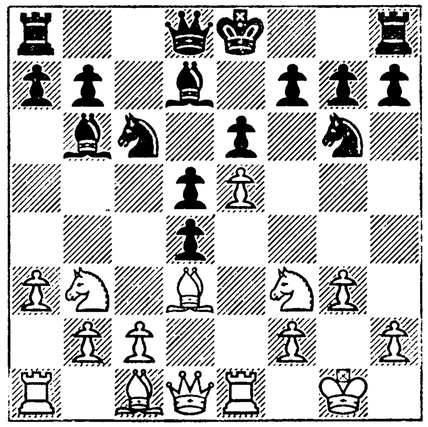
7 ... KKt–K2
8 QKt–Q2

Preferable is 8 B–B4, and if 8 ..., Kt–Kt3, then 9 B–Kt3.

8 ... Kt–Kt3
9 Kt–Kt3 B–Kt3
10 R–K1 B–Q2
11 P–Kt3

White has missed the moment for the move B–KB4 and now begins to run into difficulties. For instance, he cannot play: 11 B×Kt, RP×B; 12 Kt(Kt)×P, Kt×Kt; 13 Kt×Kt, Q–R5. So he prepares for this variation by playing the text move. In addition he threatens the attack P–KR4–R5. However, he has left his Knight at B3 without defence, which of course inspires Black with the idea of opening up the KB file.

Position after White's 11th move



11 ... P–B3

White cannot exchange at B6. E.g. after 12 P×P, Q×P, Black's pressure along the KB file is unavoidable. So to defend the centre White is forced to exchange his King's Bishop.

12 B×Kt ch P×B
13 Q–Q3

Some critics criticized Bondarevsky for not regaining the pawn with 13 Kt(Kt)×P, B×Kt; 14 Kt×B, Kt×P; 15 P–KB4. But, in this variation also Black's superiority is obvious after 15 ..., Kt–B3; 16 Kt×P, B×Kt; 17 R×B ch, K–B2. However, Black could play still more energetically: 13 ..., Kt×Kt; 14 Kt×Kt, P×P; 15 R×P, Q–B3; 16 P–KB4, P–Kt4; 17 P–B3, P×P; 18 B×P, B–B2, and White can hardly save himself.

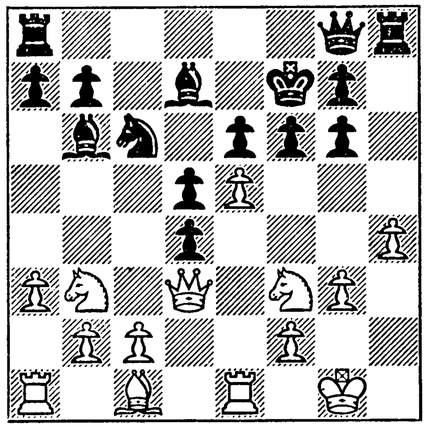
13 ... K–B2
14 P–KR4

Preparing B–B4. White, of course, cannot give up the centre, for if 14 P×P, P×P; 15 Kt(Kt)×P, Kt×Kt; 16 Kt×Kt, P–K4 the

pawn centre and Black's two Bishops would settle the matter quickly.

14 ... Q–KKt1!

Position after Black's 14th move



I think this is probably the decisive move of the game. Setting up threats to White's K side, Black forces the exchange of Queens, after which he inevitably captures the centre.

15 B–Q2

15 B–B4 is no good because of 15 ..., Q–R2; 16 Kt(Kt)×P, Kt×Kt; 17 Kt×Kt, P–Kt4!

15 ... Q–R2
16 B–Kt4

Hoping by way of B–B5 to exchange off one of Black's Bishops. But Black gives back the pawn and captures square K4.

16 ... P–Kt4
17 Q×Q R×Q
18 KP×P

It is no better to move 18 RP×P, P×KP; 19 Kt×KP ch, Kt×Kt; 20 R×Kt, B–B2; 21 R–K2, P–K4.

18 ... P×BP
19 P×P P–K4
20 P×P K×P
21 B–Q6 R–K1
22 Kt–R4 R–KKt1
23 K–R2

Of course, it is difficult for White to struggle against Black's pawn predominance in the centre and the excellent disposition of his pieces, but now comes a rapid denouement. 23 K–B1 would have put up a stronger resistance.

23 ... B–KB4
24 R–K2 P–Q6
25 R–Q2

Or 25 P×P, B×QP; 26 R–Q2, B–B5; 27 Kt–B1, Kt–Q5.

25 ... P×P
26 P–B4 B–K6
27 B×P ch Kt×B
28 P×Kt ch K–K2
29 R–KB1

There is no other defence against 29 ..., R×Kt ch, or 29 ..., B–B5.

29 ... P–B8=Q

Resigns.

No. 76. *French Defence*

M. Botvinnik (White)	*I. Boleslavsky* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K3
2 P–Q4	P–Q4
3 Kt–Q2	P–QB4
4 KP×P	KP×P
5 B–Kt5 ch	Kt–B3
6 KKt–B3	B–Q3
7 O–O	Kt–K2
8 P×P	B×P
9 Kt–Kt3	B–Kt3
10 B–K3	B×B
11 B×Kt ch	

This move (in my first game with Boleslavsky in this tournament I played 11 P×B) led commentators to draw the most profound deductions.

They explained it as meaning that Botvinnik did not wish to repeat the same variation a second time, and that he was afraid of some improvement that Boleslavsky had prepared.

All this was, of course, sheer imagination. The fact is that after 11 P×B I got no tangible advantage whatever, and so Boleslavsky was not averse from my repeating the variation. But my move 11 P×B in the previous game has to be explained as due to a miscalculation. I had also considered 11 B×Kt ch, but in the variation 11 ..., Kt×B (11 ..., P×B weakens Black's B4 square and can be accepted even without analysis as favourable for White); 12 R–K1, P–Q5; 13 P×B, P×P; 14 R×P ch, B–K3, I overlooked that White wins a pawn by 13 Kt(B3)×P.

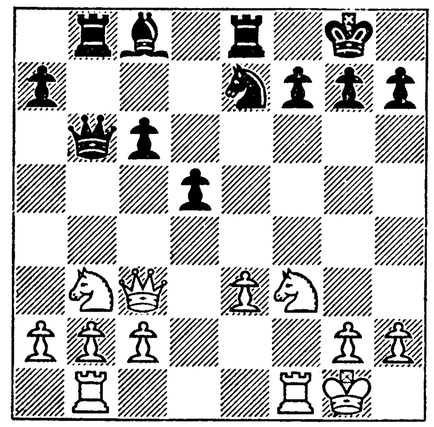
This time, of course, I corrected my mistake and played 11 B×Kt ch. So I was not avoiding any non-existent resource prepared by Boleslavsky; on the contrary, Boleslavsky himself, who had not analysed our previous game carefully, fell victim to the strengthened system I had prepared.

11 ... P×B
12 P×B O–O
13 Q–Q2 Q–Kt3
14 Q–B3 R–Kt1

Temporarily preventing the occupation of B5. White, in his turn, immediately insures the possibility of Kt–B5.

15 QR–Kt1 R–K1

Position after Black's 15th move



16 KR–K1

This move in the Nimzovitch style —"overprotection" of the K pawn —throws away a good 50 per cent of White's advantage. The simple 16 Kt–B5, Kt–B4; 17 KR–K1 is the logical continuation.

16 ... Kt–Kt3

The correct plan. In conjunction with B–Kt5 Black gains the central K4 for his Knight.

17 Kt–B5 B–Kt5
18 Kt–Q4

It was hardly possible to play 18 P–Kt4, B×Kt; 19 Kt–Q7 because of 19 ..., Q–B2; 20 Kt×R, Kt–R5.

18 ... Kt–K4
19 P–Kt4 QR–Q1
20 P–K4

Perhaps most consistent would have been 20 Kt(Q)–K6, B×Kt; 21 Q×Kt. Then the struggle would have been simplified, but White would also have firmly established himself on the black squares.

White chooses another plan, leading to lively combinational play, but less in accordance with the nature of the position. By exchanging the K-pawn White opens up the K file for pressure on the adverse Knight. But, on the other hand, Black gets the Q file for counter-play.

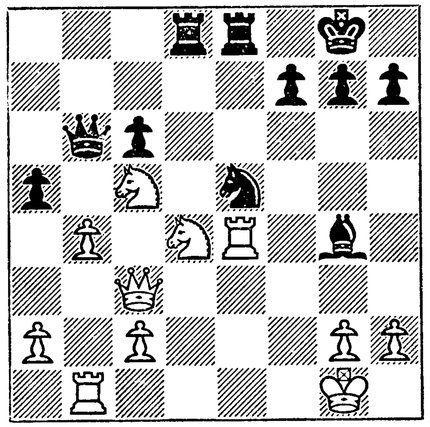
So Black should at once have played: 20 ..., P–B3, reinforcing the Knight. The exchange at K4 aids the development of White's initiative.

20 ... P×P
21 R×P P–QR4

This move is very risky, of course, as it allows the sortie 22 Q–KKt3, with attacks on two pieces. In this case it is useless to play: 22 ..., R×Kt; 23 R×R, P×P; 24 Q–QB3! or 22 ..., P×P; 23 R×Kt.

Even in the variation 22 ..., P–B3; 23 R×B, Kt×R; 24 Q×Kt, P×P; 25 Kt(Q)–K6, Black's position is not too good. Yet in this very

Position after Black's 21st move



variation Black could have saved himself after 24 ..., P–R4!; 25 Q–B4 (25 Q×RP, R–K4), P×P; 26 Kt(Q4)–Kt3, Q–Kt4 with approximately equal play. So Kotov's comment, in the special issue No. 9 of "64," to the 22nd move of this game, in which he states that 22 Q–KKt3 leads to a win for White, is without much justification.

22 P–QR3 P×P
23 P×P P–B3
24 R(Kt)–K1 K–R1

A mistake that loses the game. White obtains time to withdraw his King, which frees the Knights from the pin.

Black had his last chance to consolidate the position with 24 ..., B–R4 (taking advantage of the fact that the move 25 Kt(Q)–K6 is impossible) followed by 25 ..., B–B2. The Bishop at B2 would have covered K3 and protected the Rook on K1. The last-mentioned circumstance is important because of the possible opening of the K file.

25 K–R1 B–Q2

Leads to the loss of a pawn, but Black is already in great difficulties. For instance, 25 ..., B–R4 is bad because of 26 Kt(Q4)–K6, R–QKt1; 27 R×Kt, P×R; 28 Q×P, and 29 Q×B.

It is difficult for Black to defend himself against 26 P–R3 followed by 27 Kt–B3.

26 Kt×B R×Kt
27 Q×P Q–Q1

Black's game is lost, but the struggle is still not without interest.

28 Kt–B3 R–QB2
29 Kt×Kt P×Kt

Or 29 ..., R×Q; 30 Kt–B7 ch, K–Kt1; 31 Kt×Q, R×Kt; 32 P–B4, P–B4; 33 R–B4.

Now comes a combination which leads to a won Rook and pawn endgame.

30 Q×R ch Q×Q
31 R×P Q–KKt1
32 R–K8 R×P
33 R×Q ch K×R
34 R–QKt1 K–B2
35 P–Kt5

White ties up the adverse King and Rook with the passed pawn and then strengthens the position of his own King.

35 ... K–K3
36 P–Kt6 R–B1
37 P–R3

Also possible is K–Kt1–B2–Kt3. It would be wrong to play 37 P–Kt7, R–QKt1; 38 K–Kt1, K–Q3; 39 K–B2, K–B2; 40 K–Kt3, R×P; 41 R×R ch, K×R; 42 K–B4, K–B3; 43 K–K5, K–Q2 with a probable draw.

37 ... R–QKt1
38 K–R2 K–Q4
39 K–Kt3 K–B3
40 K–Kt4 K–Kt2

Perhaps 40 ..., R–Kt2 is slightly better. The rest of the game is simple exploitation of advantage.

41 R–K1 R–Kt1
42 R–K6 K–R3
43 K–Kt5 K–Kt2
44 P–R4 K–R3
45 P–R5 K–Kt2

46 P–Kt4 K–R3
47 K–R4 K–Kt2
48 P–R6 P×P
49 R×P R–Kt2

Now R6 is won for the King and the Black pawn is doomed.

50 K–R5 K–R3

Speeds up the loss of the pawn.

51 R–QB6 R–K2
52 R–B7 R–K4 ch
53 P–Kt5 K×P
54 R×P K–B3

The "struggle" could have been abandoned now.

55 K–R6 K–Q3
56 P–Kt6 R–K8
57 R–KB7 K–K3
58 R–B2 R–QR8
59 P–Kt7 R–R8 ch
60 K–Kt6 R–Kt8 ch
61 K–R7 R–R8 ch
62 K–Kt8 K–K2
63 R–K2 ch K–Q2
64 R–K4 R–R7
65 K–B7 Resigns

No. 77. *Ruy Lopez*

V. Smyslov (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K4
2 Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3 B–Kt5	P–QR3
4 B–R4	Kt–B3
5 P–Q3	

An old continuation. White does not attempt to keep the initiative in the opening but relies on a favourable middle-game.

5 ... P–Q3
6 P–B3 B–K2
7 O–O O–O
8 R–K1 P–QKt4
9 B–B2

White wants to prevent the manœuvre Kt–QR4 followed by P–B4, but Black delivers a blow in the centre, (P–Q4) and gets an equal game.

After 9 B–Kt3 we get the Ruy Lopez Variation which was the favourite weapon of A. Ilyin-Zhenevsky.

9 ... P–Q4
10 QKt–Q2 P×P

Black secures his central pawn at K4.

11 P×P B–K3
12 P–KR3

Threatening 13 Kt–Kt5.

12 ... P–R3
13 Kt–R2

After 13 Kt–R4, P–Kt3, Black would have a quite reliable position. The protracted manœuvres undertaken by White are harmless for Black.

13 ... Kt–KR2

The manœuvre Kt–KR2 and B–Kt4 aims at the exchange of black Bishops: in the event of exchange White's chances of an attack against the K side would be reduced to the minimum.

14 Kt–Kt4 B–Kt4
15 Q–K2

White avoids exchanging Queens, but the obvious move is 15 Kt–Kt3, exploiting Black's weakened QB4.

15 ... Q–Q3
16 Kt–K3

Avoiding exchange of the black Bishops White persists in his resolution to make a direct attack on the Black King.

16 ... KR–Q1
17 Kt–B3 B×Kt

Of course, this active Knight should be destroyed, especially as it is disadvantageous for White to play 18 B×B because of B–B5.

18 Q×B Q–K2

Parrying 19 Kt–R4.

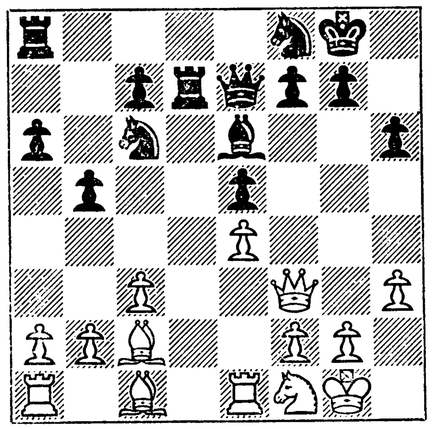
19 Kt–R2 Kt–B1

As a result of the manœuvres the game has even gone in Black's favour; on the K side all is quiet, while Black can start operations along the Q file.

But with this last move, Black loses two tempi, and the initiative. He should have played 19 ..., R–Q2 at once.

20 Q–B3 R–Q2
21 Kt–B1

Position after White's 21st move



Black cannot prevent the White Knight reaching B5. In order to secure the Queen's transfer to KB3 Black must return his Knight to KR2.

21 ... Kt–KR2
22 Kt–Kt3 QR–Q1
23 Kt–B5 Q–B3
24 P–KKt4

Having posted his Knight at B5, it is difficult to avoid supporting it by P–KKt4. Perhaps 24 Q–Kt3 with the threat P–KB4 would have been more subtle. In this case Black would have defended himself with 24 ..., Q–Kt3.

24 ... Kt–K2
25 Q–Kt3 B–B5

The pressure along the Q file is now real, for Black threatens to capture the centre of resistance, Q6. White's next move prepares the development of the Bishop to K3.

26 P–B3 B–Q6
27 B–Kt3 P–B4

Black drives the Bishop back to Q1 and separates the White Rooks. But the struggle is of such a closed nature that this has no decisive significance.

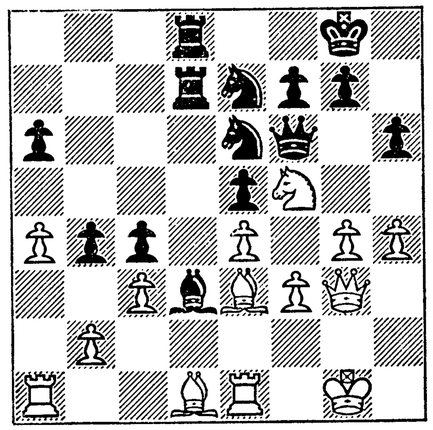
It is no advantage for White to continue 28 Kt×Kt ch, Q×Kt; 29 B–Q5, in view of 29 ... B–B5.

28 B–K3 P–B5
29 B–Q1 Kt–Kt4
30 P–KR4

30 P–QR4 immediately is preferable.

30 ... Kt–K3
31 P–R4 P–Kt5

Position after Black's 31st move



Only thus can Black avoid the opening up of the QR file. The struggle is so complicated that for some time White's extra pawn will not be of much significance.

32 P×P Kt–B5

White does not want to part with the two Bishops, so he does not play 33 B×Kt, P×B; 34 Q–B2 (34 Q×P, Q×KtP). As, on the other hand, there threatens 33 ..., Kt×Kt; 34 KtP×Kt, B×P; 35 P×B, R×B; 36 QR×R, R×R; 37 R×R, Kt–K7 ch, he withdraws the King.

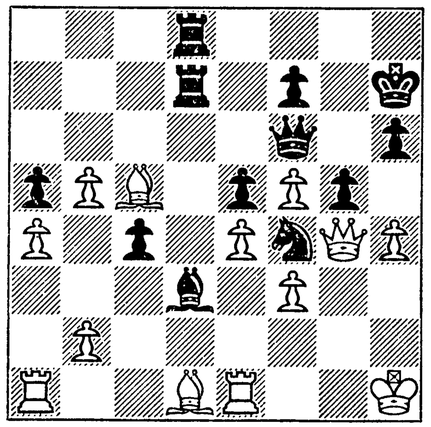
33 K–R1 P–Kt4

34 P–Kt5 P–QR4
35 B–B5

A mistake which could easily become fatal. White's situation is difficult, but in no circumstances should he have withdrawn his Bishop from an important defensive post. Any other move (for instance R–QB1) would have been better.

35 ... Kt×Kt
36 KtP×Kt K–R2
37 Q–Kt4

Position after White's 37th move



Of course he could not play 37 P×P, P×P because of the attack along the KR file, but the text move is very weak. In any case White cannot close up the position by P–R5. Evidently in the variation 37 ..., P×P; 38 B–KB2, R–KKt1; 39 B×P, he overlooked the move Q–QKt3, after which the White Queen is lost.

The continuation recommended by Abramov (in the special issue No. 8 of "64"): 37 Q–R2 is better, but seemingly it also does not save the game in view of the brilliant stroke 37 ..., B–B7! For instance, after 38 P×P, Q×KtP; 39 B–K2, Kt×B; 40 R×Kt, R–Q8 ch; 41 R×R, B×R; 42 B–K3, Q–B3; 43 R–KB2, R–Q6; 44 R–B1, R×B; 45 R×B, R×BP White's situation is grave.

37 ... P×P

38 R–KKt1 P–R4

Still simpler is 38 ..., B–B8 with the threat B–R6. E.g. after 39 B–KB2, B–Kt7 ch; 40 R×B, Kt×R or 40 K–R2, R–Q7 the outcome of the game is obvious.

39 Q–Kt5 Q×Q
40 R×Q P–B3

Now, too, 40 ..., B–B8 leads at the very least to winning the exchange. It would seem that in any case Black has a won position, but Smyslov finds a remarkable way of saving himself.

41 R–KKt1 Kt–R6

Sealed move. Black captures the KKt file for an attack on the White King.

42 R–K1 R–KKt1
43 R–R2!

The only move. Black planned 43 ..., R–Kt6, then R(Q)–KKt2 and Kt–B7 ch followed by R–R6 mate. No use 43 P–Kt3, P–B6; 44 R–R2 because of 44 ..., R–QB1 and Black wins a piece. By interchanging moves White avoids this variation and secures the transfer of the Rook to KR2 to defend the King.

So Black discards the plan he had in mind.

43 ... B–Kt8
44 R–R1 B–Q6
45 R–R2 Kt–B5
46 P–Kt4

Black threatened R–Kt7. White also tries to take advantage of his pawn superiority on the Q side, but Black has sufficient resources for defence.

46 ... R–QB1
47 P–Kt6 R–QKt2

White is now forced to give up the pawn at Kt4, which leads to further keen play—two far advanced passed pawns on each side!

48 B–K3 P×P

49 P–R5 P–Kt6
50 R–R3

This mistake turns out to be decisive. It was still not too late for 50 R–QKt2, R–QR1 (50 ..., P–B6; 51 R×P, P–B7; 52 B×P, B×B; 53 R–R3); 51 B–Q2, R–R3; 52 B–Kt4 and Black cannot break through anywhere.

White relies on his pawns, but Black's pawns prove to be more dangerous.

50 ... P–Kt7
51 B–R4 P–B6

Preventing P–R6.

52 R–Kt3 Kt–K7
53 B–QKt5 B×B
54 R×B Kt–Q5

The decisive manœuvre—Black obtains three linked passed pawns.

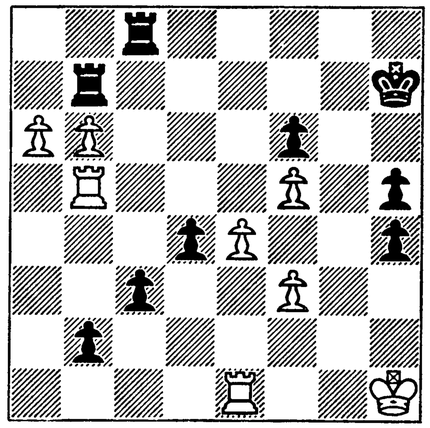
55 B×Kt P×B
56 P–R6 R×P!

The pawn is worth the Rook. Now the Black pawns cannot be stopped!

57 R×R P–Q6

Smyslov pondered over his next move for fifty minutes—but there is no salvation. White lacks only one tempo. . . .

Position after White's 56th move



58 R–KKt1 P–Q7
59 R×BP

Now it is clear what Smyslov still hoped for: if 59 ..., P–B7 then 60 R–B7 ch, K–R1; 61 R–B6, K–R2; 62 R–B7 ch, and a draw by repetition of moves.

59 ... R–B2
60 R(B)–KKt6

Even now, after 60 ..., P–B7; 61 R(6)–Kt5, White could get a draw.

60 ... P–Q8=Q

Resigns.

No. 78. *Slav Defence*

A. Lilienthal (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	P–QB3
4 Kt–B3	Kt–B3
5 P–K3	

White avoids the usual continuations of the Queen's Gambit associated with the move 5 B–Kt5 and goes over to variations of the Slav Defence. Black chooses the most active variation of this defence—Rubinstein's Meran Variation.

5 ... QKt–Q2
6 B–Q3 P×P
7 B×BP P–QKt4
8 B–Q3 P–QR3

The main idea of the variation is far from new—Black intends to develop his Queen's Bishop to Kt2 and attack White's centre by playing P–QB4. As always in such cases, Black wins a tempo by the exchange of pawns on his QB4. Thus Rubinstein merely introduced a previously known idea into the Slav Defence.

In the given instance the struggle immediately becomes exceptionally sharp, since White, taking advantage of the fact that he has not, as in other variations of the gambit, lost a tempo on developing the Bishop to Kt5, can launch a dangerous offensive in the centre.

9 P–K4 P–B4
10 P–K5 P×P
11 Kt×KtP Kt×P

Black's last move is Sozin's rejoinder to Blumenfeld's plan (11 Kt×KtP).

12 Kt×Kt P×Kt
13 O–O

This position can be found in any textbook on openings. The question arises: why did Lilienthal go in for all this variation? The further course of the game provides no clear answer. Most probably he counted on discovering something over the board. But in such sharp variations one discovers only when well acquainted with theoretical research and games previously played; but that knowledge was lacking in this case.

13 ... Q–Q4
14 Q–K2 B–R3
15 P–QR4

At the 13th move White avoided 13 Q–B3, recommended by theoreticians, and now he declines the Rellstab attack 15 B–Kt5, older, but also dangerous for Black. After the text move the initiative passes to Black.

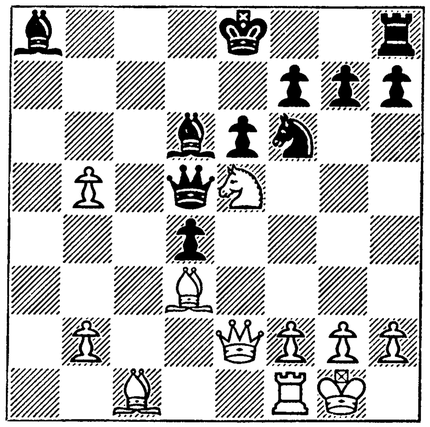
15 ... B–Q3
16 P×P B–Kt2
17 R×R ch B×R

After 17 ..., K–K2; 18 Kt–B6 ch!, B×Kt; 19 R–R7 ch, B–Kt2, White has won the exchange.

18 Kt–B6

18 P–B4 is not very satisfactory in view of B×Kt; 19 P×B, Kt–Q2; 20 B–KB4, Kt–B4; 21 R–B2, O–O. White gives up a pawn in order to exchange off the Bishop at R1. Left with two Bishops, he hopes for counter-play.

Position after Black's 17th move



18 ... B×Kt
19 P×B K–K2

This move is the result of a miscalculation. Black reckoned that in the variation 19 ..., O–O; 20 B–QKt5, R–Kt1; 21 B–R4, P–Q6; 22 Q–B3, Q×Q; 23 P×Q White has chances of a draw, while with the King at K2 these chances would be reduced to a minimum.

In reality, Black would have won a piece in both cases by 22 ..., Q–Q5. If 22 Q–Q1, Kt–K5; 23 B–K3, R×P White also has a difficult game.

So castling was the natural and best move. But now White secures Bishops of opposite colours, which makes it very difficult for Black to win.

20 B–QB4 Q×P
21 B–KKt5 Q–B4

Forcing events. Because of the threat 22 ..., Q–K4 with exchange of Queens, White has no time to withdraw his black Bishop.

22 B×Kt ch K×B

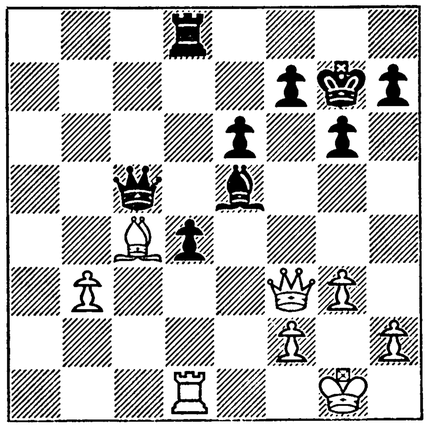
Only by retaining a good pawn formation can Black count on exploiting his pawn advantage. To 23 Q–B3 ch Black can reply 23 ..., Q–B4.

23 P–QKt3 P–Kt3
24 R–Q1 R–Q1

25 P–Kt3 K–Kt2
26 Q–B3 B–K4

If the Black pawn were at Q4 instead of Q5, Black would have no difficulty in winning. He would advance P–K4–K5, which in conjunction with the good diagonals available to the Bishop would immediately settle the issue.

Position after Black's 26th move



Now this plan is impossible, and he has to try to increase his advantage.

Obviously the struggle must flare up around the open QR file. It is curious that White does not pay due attention to Black's attempt to capture this important file.

With move 26 Black frees his Queen and Rook from protecting the pawn and will command his QR8 square, preventing the move R–R1.

27 Q–Kt7 R–QKt1
28 Q–K4 B–B3
29 K–Kt2 Q–QR4

So the QR file is Black's. As White is avoiding the exchange of Queens (there is no point in avoiding it, as extra pieces with opposite-colour Bishops increase, as a rule, the winning chances), he moves the Queen from his KR1–QR8 diagonal.

30 Q–K2 R–QR1
31 R–Q3 Q–QB4

In such positions it is advisable to keep the Rook in front of the Queen. So Black rearranges his pieces.

32 Q–K4 R–R8
33 R–Q2 Q–QR4

White's unsystematic manœuvres have led to a further deterioration of his position.

34 Q–K2 Q–R1 ch
35 K–R3

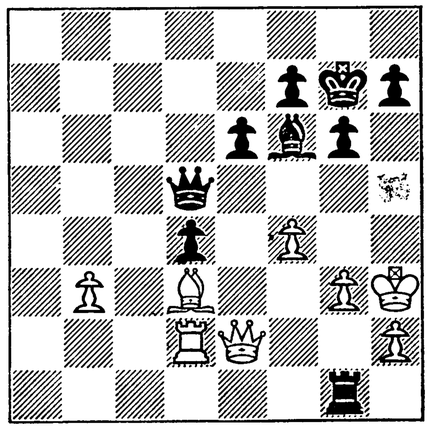
Not, of course, 35 Q–B3, R–Kt8 ch. 35 P–B3 is possible, but it leads to further weakening of the position.

35 ... R–KKt8
36 P–B4 Q–QB1

Threatening 37 ..., P–K4 dis. ch.

37 B–R6 Q–B4
38 B–Q3 Q–Q4

Position after Black's 38th move



A trap. By continuing 39 B–B4 or 39 P–QKt4, Q–Q2; 40 Q–B2, White could have resisted stubbornly.

Attempting to provoke the exchange of Rooks, he loses a second pawn, which decides the struggle.

39 R–Q1 R–Kt7!

An unpleasant surprise!

40 Q–K4

40 Q–K1, R–Kt7 is hopeless.

40 ... R×RP ch
41 K×R Q–R4 ch
42 K–Kt2 Q×R
43 B–B4 P–R4

44 Q–B3

Otherwise 44 ..., P–R5 is unpleasant.

44 ... Q×Q ch
45 K×Q B–K2
46 K–K4 B–B4
47 B–Kt5 K–B3
48 B–K2 K–K2
49 B–Kt5 B–Kt5

By exchanging his QP for the adverse KKtP, Black speeds up the achievement of three linked passed pawns.

50 K×P B–K8
51 K–K4 B×P
52 K–B3 B–K8
53 B–B6 B–Kt5
54 B–R4 B–Q3
55 B–B6 P–B4

White resigns. There is no defence against P–K4.

NINETEEN FORTY-THREE

FROM 1941 to 1943 I gave all my time to my work as an engineer. During the summer I had to travel a great deal, visiting the power stations in the Urals to test high-tension insulation. During the winter I worked in the high-tension laboratory at Molotov, servicing the works of the Molotov Electricity Corporation in the repair and testing of insulations.

It may not be superfluous to remark that the insulation installations in the charge of our laboratory worked throughout this time without breakdowns.

At the beginning of 1943 I took up chess again. On Wednesdays and Saturdays I was freed from work in order to devote myself to the game. I made use of this free time to prepare for the forthcoming Masters' Tournament to be held in Sverdlovsk.

The tournament brought a group of strong masters together in competition, but, despite my two years' lack of tournament practice, I was in good form and came out first.

At the end of the year, at the invitation of the Moscow Chess Section I took part, *hors concours*, in the Moscow Championship. During the first part of the tournament I was defeated by Smyslov, but a good finish enabled me to come out ahead of all the competitors.

I continued to devote Wednesdays and Saturdays to chess affairs, in connection with the preparation of my book on the 1941 Match-Tournament.

SVERDLOVSK MASTERS' TOURNAMENT

March–April

No. 79. *Sicilian Defence*

Botvinnik (White)	*Boleslavsky* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–QB4
2 Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3 P–Q4	P×P
4 Kt×P	Kt–B3
5 QKt–B3	P–Q3
6 B–K2	P–K4

One of Boleslavsky's shrewd innovations in the opening. Black achieves a satisfactory development and equalizes the game; in this case the weakness of Q4 square is immaterial.

7 Kt–Kt3 B–K2

Wasting no time on P–KR3, to prevent the manœuvre B–Kt5×Kt; as, if 8 B–Kt5, Kt×P; 9 Kt×Kt, B×B; 10 Kt×QP ch, K–K2, Black has a quite satisfactory position.

8 O–O O–O
9 P–B4 P×P

Very subtly played. Otherwise 10 P–B5, and then even if Black managed to play P–Q4, White would get a good base at K4 for his minor pieces.

10 B×P B–K3
11 B–Q3 Kt–K4

This also is perfectly satisfactory, but perhaps the simplest is 11 ..., P–Q4 as in the given position the opening up of the Q3–R7 diagonal is of no real importance.

12 K–R1 Q–Kt3
13 Q–K2

A shrewd idea. White sacrifices a pawn, but gains several tempi and exchanges off Black's active Bishop at K3.

13 ... Kt×B
14 P×Kt!

This is better, of course, than 14 Q×P.

14 ... B×Kt
15 B–K3

With gain of tempo opening up the KB file and transferring the Bishop to a better position.

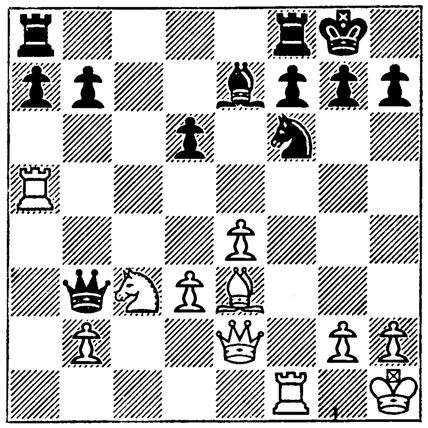
15 ... Q–Kt5

The appetite comes with eating! Even now it was not too late to play 15 ..., Q–B3; 16 P×B, P–Q4 with counter-play. But now the initiative passes to White for a long time.

16 P×B Q×P
17 R–R5

White does not waste time capturing the RP but transfers his Rook to the K side for an attack. In exchange for the pawn sacrifice he gets excellently placed pieces and keeps the initiative for a long time.

Position after White's 17th move



17 ... Q–K3
18 B–Q4 B–Q1

Boleslavsky consolidates his superiority in material, as 19 R×P, R×R; 20 B×R, P–QKt3 is dangerous for White.

19 R(R)–KB5 Kt–Q2

Forced: otherwise 20 R×Kt,! B×R; 21 R×B!, P×R; 22 Kt–Q5 with a stronger attack.

20 Q–Kt4 Kt–K4
21 Q–Kt3

Of course, unsound is 21 R×BP, Q×R!; 22 R×Q, Kt×Q.

21 ... P–B3
22 Kt–Q5 P–QR3

Although in this position it is difficult for Boleslavsky to display any activity, White's task is not easy, as Black has dug himself in well. The only possibility of success lies in a bayonet charge—P–KKt4–Kt5.

As will be evident later, the immediate 22 ..., P–QR4 would give Black greater possibilities of exploiting his pawn superiority on the Q side.

23 Q–R3 R–K1

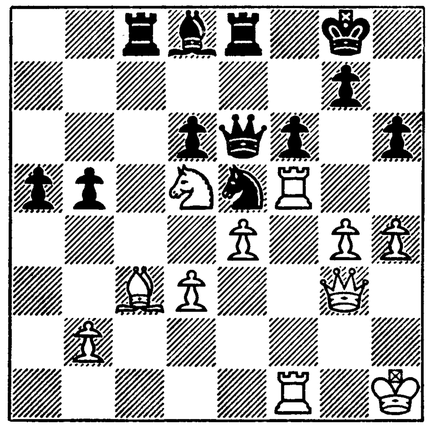
Not allowing 24 R×P!

24 P–KKt4 P–KR3
25 Q–Kt3

White cannot break through without P–R4.

25 ... R–QB1
26 B–B3 P–QR4
27 P–R4 P–QKt4

Position after Black's 27th move



White's play seems to have come to a dead end. In fact, P–Kt5 is not possible for the time being, while Black threatens P–QKt5 followed by R–B7.

But White has still one other hidden possibility.

28 Q–R3!

A quiet move, but unpleasant for Black. In view of the unstable position of his Queen at K3 there is a threat of 29 P–Kt5, BP×P; 30 B×Kt, P×B; 31 P×P, B×P; 32 R–B8 ch!

If Black plays 28 ..., Kt–Q2 in order to meet the Rook check by taking it with the Knight, White continues: 29 Kt–B4!, Q–Kt6; 30 P–Kt5, BP×P; 31 P×P, B×P; 32 R×B, P×R; 33 Kt–Kt6, with a mating attack.

The only salvation for Black is in 28 ..., K–R2! and in his turn exploiting the unsatisfactory position of the White Queen (29 P–Kt5, BP×P; 30 P×P, B×P!). In this case Black probably would get equal play.

28 ... Kt–B2

This move enables White to transpose to the endgame with a Queen against two Rooks. The endgame is unfavourable to Black because of his King's open position and his broken pawns.

29 B×BP

An unpleasant surprise!

29 ... B×B
30 Kt×B ch P×Kt
31 R×P Q–Q2
32 R×Kt Q×R
33 R×Q K×R
34 P–Kt5

As unsound as it is attractive. Of course this quickly wins a pawn, but Black manages to cut off the White King's retreat from the K side, and then the King is insecurely placed.

The correct move is 34 K–Kt2! and after 34 ..., R–B7 ch; 35 K–B3, R×KtP; 36 P–Kt5; or 35 ..., P–Q4!; 36 P–Kt5, P×P ch; 37 P×P, R–KB1; 38 K–K3, White would be justified in counting on the win.

34 ... P×P
35 Q–B5 ch

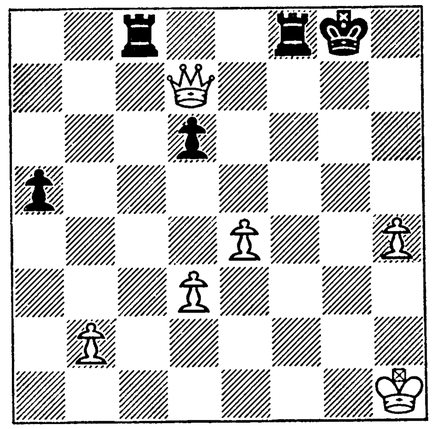
After 35 Q–Q7 ch, Kt–Kt3!; 36 Q×P ch, K–R4; 37 P×P, R(B)–Q1, the passive position of his King also makes it difficult for White to exploit his material advantage.

35 ... K–Kt2
36 Q×P ch K–R2
37 Q×KtP R–B1!
38 Q–Q7 ch K–Kt1
39 Q–K6 ch K–Kt2
40 Q–Q7 ch K–Kt1
41 K–Kt2

41 Q×QP is followed by 41 ..., R–QB7. White improves his King's position, but at the cost of a tempo.

41 ... R–QB7 ch

Position after Black's 40th move



42 K–Kt3 R(QB7)–B7

This is a decisive blunder. Now White will be able to repulse Black's Rook attack and win the game, combining defence with the advance of his central pawns. Meanwhile, after 42 ..., R×KtP!; 43 Q×P, R(Kt)–KB7; 44 Q–Q5 ch, R(7)–B2; 45 P–K5, P–R5, it is possible that Black could have obtained a draw, as he could check along the KB file because of his passed pawn.

No. 80. *Slav Defence*

Makogonov (White)	*Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	P–QB3
4 P–K3	Kt–KB3
5 Kt–B3	QKt–Q2
6 Kt–K5	

This "anti-Meran" variation of Rubinstein's is entirely in Makogonov's style. However, probably Rubinstein employed it simply to avoid revealing the secrets of a sound White attack in his "own" Meran Variation, whereas Makogonov always prefers continuations in which book knowledge is of little help and positional sense is everything!

6 Kt–K5 has the defect that White will be forced to weaken K4.

43 Q×P	R(7)–B2
44 Q–Q5	K–R1
45 P–K5	R–Kt2 ch
46 K–R3	R–Kt3

Counting on winning the KP if 47 P–K6, R–K1; 48 P–K7, K–Kt2.

47 P–Q4	R–B8

Again making 48 P–K6 difficult because of 48 ..., R–K8 with various threats.

48 Q–K4	R(Kt)–KKt8
49 P–Q5	R–R8 ch

49 ..., R–K8 is more "resistant."

50 K–Kt4	R(R)–Kt8 ch
51 K–R5	R–B2
52 P–K6!	Resigns

52 ..., R–R2 ch is followed by 53 Q×R ch, and the pawns are queened.

A game not free from mistakes, but interesting, and characteristic of Boleslavsky's inventive style.

6 ...	Kt×Kt
7 P×Kt	Kt–Q2
8 P–B4	B–Kt5
9 P×P	

A serious blunder, as now the development of Black's Queen's Bishop is made easier. Here Rubinstein continued 9 B–Q2, which is more to the point. Makogonov set himself the task of transferring his King's Bishop to B2, and for this the exchange at Q5 is certainly indispensable.

Psychologically Makogonov's mistake is quite understandable; in a game against Yudovich (Leningrad, 1939) in which Black played 8 ..., B–K2, he continued 9 P×P followed by B–Q3, and won. Naturally, he would not want to revise such a "successful" plan of development.

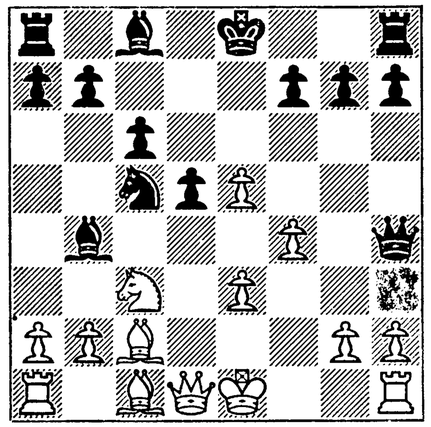
9 ...	KP×P

10 B–Q3	Kt–B4
11 B–B2	

Quite obviously White has not calculated all the possibilities at Black's disposal; otherwise he would play 11 O–O, which would be, perhaps, a lesser evil.

11 ...	Q–R5 ch

Position after Black's 11th move



The critical moment. Even now, by continuing 12 K–B1, White would preserve a defensible position, as his basic weakness, square K4, is not so easily exploited. But Makogonov automatically replies 12 P–KKt3, after which an exchange of the white-square Bishops is inevitable and, in conjunction with the weakness of K4, White gets a completely lost game (from the positional aspect).

12 P–Kt3	Q–R6

Because of the possible 13 ..., Q–Kt7 White is not able to avert B–B4; it would seem that Black should win easily. So it would have been, in all probability, if Makogonov had not suddenly begun to play with extraordinary power. He succeeded in "almost" equalizing the game, and Black had to play very subtly and exactly in order to carry the work, once begun, to its logical conclusion.

13 K–B2!	B×Kt

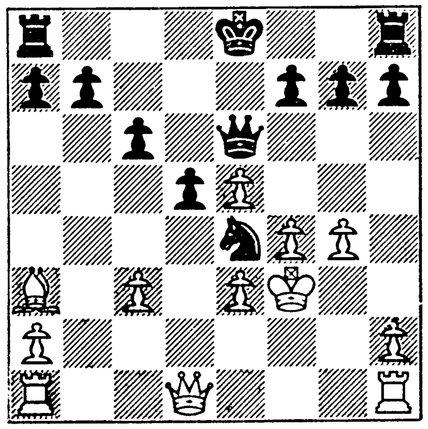
Perfectly sound; as Black intends to occupy White's K4, the Knight must be removed.

14 P×B	B–B4
15 B×B	Q×B
16 P–Kt4!!	

Uncommonly well played: now White's weakness in his own squares will be less perceptible. Black is faced with the dilemma: where should the Queen go: K5 or K3? If 16 ..., Q–K5, then 17 B–R3!!, Kt–Q6 ch; 18 K–Kt3, Q×KP ch; 19 Q–B3, and the initiative passes to White. Black decides on K3, but perhaps 16 ..., Q–Q2 is more exact. as will be evident from the following play.

16 ...	Q–K3
17 B–R3!	Kt–K5 ch
18 K–B3	

Position after White's 18th move



It is doubtful whether Black should accept the pawn sacrifice now, as, if 18 ..., Kt×P; 19 Q–Kt3, Kt–Kt4 (this is where the Black Queen's occupation of Q2 would be useful; in that case Black would play 19 ..., Kt–K5! retaining the extra pawn and a centralized Knight!); 20 B–Kt2, O–O–O; 21 P–B5, White would again have the initiative.

On the other hand, White intends to continue 19 P–B4. Black's situation has suddenly become not quite

so brilliant. However, he finds the way out.

18 ... P–KR4
19 P–KR3 P–B3!

This not very noticeable move decides the struggle. White cannot exchange at KB6, for 20 P×P, Kt×P leads to exposure of all the weaknesses of the White King's position, *vis-à-vis* his pawns.

So Black in the last resort wins a pawn, while preserving his centralized Knight.

20 P–B4 RP×P ch!

An important intermediary exchange; White threatened 21 P×P, after which 21 ..., Q×QP would lead to the endgame. So Black deflects the White Queen from Q5, winning a tempo.

21 P×P R×R
22 Q×R O–O–O

With a threat of Kt–Q7 ch and Kt×BP, or simply of BP×P. White cannot play 23 P×QP because of 23 ..., Q×QP; so he is forced to lose time on 23 R–Q1, losing the K5 pawn in doing so!

23 R–Q1 BP×P
24 QBP×P BP×P
25 R–B1 ch K–Kt1
26 Q–R4 R–K1
27 P–B5 Q–B2

27 ..., Q–R3 would be followed by 28 Q–R5 with attack on the Rook and the strong threat Q–B7–QB7 ch.

28 R–B2

For fifteen moves Makogonov has been playing brilliantly, and of course he is not averse from making one quiet move, for a "rest." Meanwhile he should have taken steps against Black's imminent attack, offering the endgame with 28 Q–R5. Now the game is decided by a direct attack on the White King.

28 ... P–KKt3
29 B–Kt2

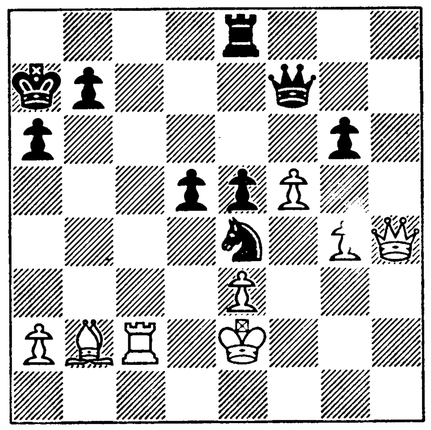
Makogonov again begins to exploit tactical subtleties (29 ..., P×P; 30 B×P ch!, K–R1; 31 P–Kt5) but they do not save the game.

29 ... P–R3
30 K–K2

The prospect of 30 B×P ch, R×B; 31 Q–Q8 ch, K–R2; 32 R–B8, R×BP ch!!; could not attract White, as Black mates first! Now 30 ..., P×P is followed by 31 B×P ch!, R×B; 32 Q–Q8 ch, K–R2; 33 R–B8, and then White mates first.

30 ... K–R2!

Position after Black's 30th move



This quiet move, robbing White of a tempo for doublingh is major pieces (Q–Q8 ch!) on the eighth rank, finally determines the outcome.

31 Q–R2 Q–B3
32 P×P Q×P
33 Q–Kt2 R–KB1
34 B×P

The last trick; but White has overlooked Black's 39th move.

34 ... R–B7 ch
35 Q×R Kt×Q
36 B–Q4 ch P–Kt3

The only move.

37 R–B7 ch K–Kt1

38 B–K5 Kt×P

Now after 39 R–KKt7 dis. ch Black is left with an extra Knight.

39 B–B4 Kt–K4!

This is the move White had not noticed.

Probably White continued his further "heroic" resistance through sheer inertia, for with the loss of the RP his outlook is hopeless.

40 R–K7 Q–B7 ch
41 K–K1 K–B1
42 B×Kt Q×P
43 R–B7 ch K–Q1
44 R–B1 P–R4

Black has no reason to fear the variation 45 B–B7 ch, K–Q2; 46 B×P, Q–QKt7.

45 B–Q4 P–Kt4
46 R–R1 Q–Kt6

Here, too, the continuation 47 B–Kt6 ch, K–Q2; 48 R×P, K–B3! (49 R–R6, K–Kt2) leads to further losses of material for White.

47 K–B2 P–R5
48 K–B3 Q–B7
49 K–B4 K–Q2
50 K–K5 Q–K5 ch
51 K–B6 Q–K2 ch
52 K–Kt6 P–R6
53 R–KB1 P–Kt5

White can win the Queen. . . .!

54 R–B7 Q×R ch!

. . . but Black gets a new Queen! It was still possible to lose all by 54 ..., P–Kt6; 55 R×Q, K×R; 56 B–B5 ch!

55 K×Q P–Kt6

White resigns.

In this game Makogonov displayed exceptional tenacity, which is not surprising: this game, played in the last round of the first part, decided the leadership of the tournament.

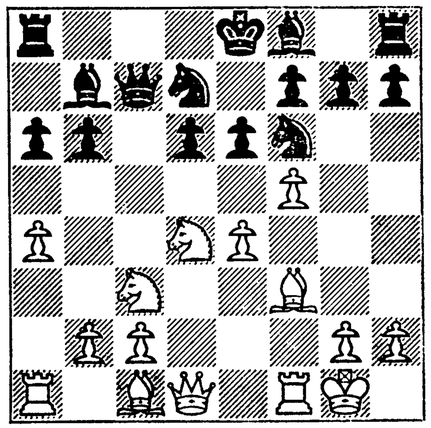
No. 81. *Sicilian Defence*

Botvinnik (White)	*Kann* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–QB4
2 Kt–KB3	P–K3
3 P–Q4	P×P
4 Kt×P	Kt–KB3
5 QKt–B3	P–Q3

In the Scheveningen Variation there are two main schemes of development of Black's pieces on the Q side: Kt–QB3 and B–Q2, or the fianchetto of the Queen's Bishop and QKt–Q2–QB4. In this game Kann chooses the second system. From the viewpoint of pressure with pieces on the centre it is quite logical.

6 B–K2 P–QR3
7 P–QR4 Q–B2
8 P–B4 QKt–Q2
9 O–O P–QKt3
10 B–B3 B–Kt2
11 P–B5

Position after White's 11th move



An unpleasant blow for Black. White exploits the absence of the Bishop from B1 to attack the KP. As Black cannot allow a file to be opened so long as he has not completed development, he is forced to weaken his Q4.

11 ... P–K4

12 Kt–Kt3 Kt–B4

Kann probably assumed that this move would force an exchange at QB5, which would ease his defence. But he was to suffer a disappointment.

In a later Romanovsky–Kann game (Moscow, 1947) the continuation 12 ..., B–K2; 13 Q–K2, O–O; 14 K–R1, QR–B1; 15 B–Q2, KR–K1 followed by P–Q4 led to a favourable position for Black. However, that game is unconvincing, as Romanovsky did not decide on the logical continuation 14 P–Kt4 (or 15 P–Kt4). It is permissible to ask why White went in for all this energetic variation, if he could not bring himself to move P–KKt4 after Black had Castled on that side?

13 Q–K2!

A second unpleasantness! It transpires that 13 ..., Kt×Kt; 14 P×Kt is unfavourable to Black, and White is the first to exploit the open QB file!

13 ... B–K2
14 K–R1 P–R3

Here Black is faced with a difficult question: on which side should he Castle? On the K side is dangerous, as a pawn storm of his K side begins (P–KKt4–Kt5). The Q side also is not safe, owing to the lack of a reliable pawn screen. So Kann decides to leave the King in the centre; but here too the King comes under fire!

15 B–Q2 R–Q1
16 B–K1

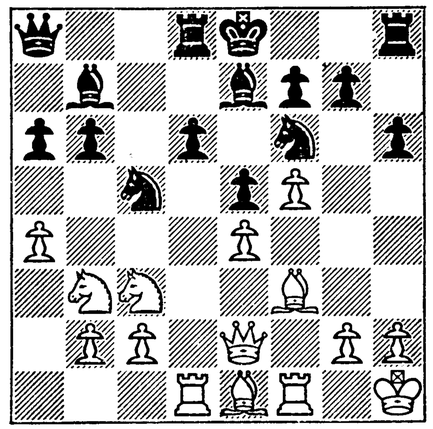
After Black has deprived the Queen's Bishop of KKt5 this is the only, and a good means of bringing the Bishop into the fight.

16 ... Q–B1

An unfortunate idea which uses several tempi and costs Black the game. As early as the 12th move Kann had attempted to provoke a Knight exchange at B5; now he genuinely "compels" this exchange after the transfer of the Queen to QR1, and gets a lost position. 16 ..., O–O is better.

17 R–Q1 Q–R1

Position after Black's 17th move



18 Kt×Kt QP×Kt

After this move events develop violently. 18 ..., KtP×Kt is really better, but even that would give White clear positional superiority owing to the weakness of Black's white squares Q4 and QB5.

19 B–Kt3! R×R
20 R×R Q–Kt1

Black is unable to defend the KP with the Knight, it would weaken his Q4. But now White, forcing the exchange at his Q5, intensifies the pressure on the KP, which, in conjunction with the unsatisfactory position of the Black King, is of decisive importance.

21 Kt–Q5 Kt×Kt
22 P×Kt B–Q3

This is really the only move. Bad are both 22 ..., B–B3; 23 P–Q6, and 22 ..., P–B3; 23 P–Q6, B×B; 24 P–Q7 ch, and 25 Q×B. Now Black proposes to close up the position with 23 ..., P–B3 and so get a satisfactory defence.

23 P–B6! P–Kt3

Objectively the best. After 23 ..., P×P; 24 B–K4, followed by 25 B–R4, and 26 R–KB1, White wins back a pawn, while retaining all the advantages of his situation.

24 B×KP

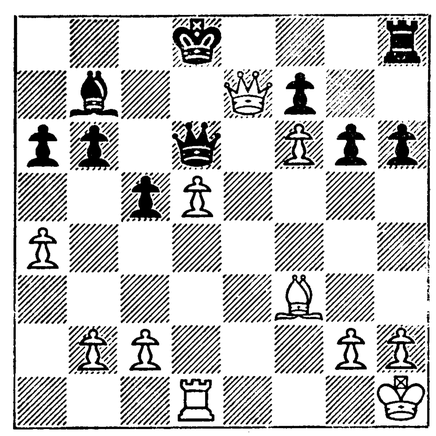
The obvious move, which of course Black foresaw. 24 ..., B×B can be followed by either 25 R–K1, or by the more resolute 25 P–Q6. And so Black loses an important central pawn, but he does not yet lose hope of saving the game, as the White QP is blocked.

24 ... K–Q1

As an idea, this is sound: the King is placed best of all on the Q file; but Black overlooks White's 26th move, after which the White pawns come to life and the game transposes to a hopeless endgame for Black. To be fair, we must note that with the other continuation: 24 ..., K–Q2; 25 B–B3! (this Bishop must be preserved), R–K1; 26 Q–B4 (26 ..., B×RP; 27 P–Q6), Black's situation would be anything but good.

25 B×B Q×B
26 Q–K7 ch!

Position after White's 26th move



A terrible check! The endgame is hopeless for Black, though it is by no means simple for White to win, owing to the closed nature of the position.

26 ... Q×Q
27 P×Q ch K–Q2

Of course, not K×P, because of 28 P–Q6 ch.

28 P–Q6 B×B
29 P×B R–QB1
30 K–Kt2 P–KKt4

Facilitates the win. The weakening of Black's KB4 and KR4 squares opens up ways for the White King's breakthrough.

31 R–Q5!

On this square the Rook is invulnerable.

31 ... R–KKt1
32 K–Kt3 P–B3
33 K–Kt4 K–K3
34 K–R5!

White's plan is simple: to win one more pawn, and then, surrendering the K and Q pawns, to transpose to a pawn endgame. The KRP is indefensible; 34 ..., R–R1 is followed by 35 K–Kt6.

34 ... P–QR4
35 K×P K–B2
36 K–R5 R–R1 ch
37 K–Kt4 R–R5 ch

But now if 38 K–B5, then 38 ..., R–B5 mate!

38 K–Kt3 R–R1
39 P–KB4 P×P ch
40 K×P K–K3

The time has come to transpose to the pawn endgame.

41 P–Q7 K×P
42 P–Q8(Q) ch R×Q
43 R×R K×R
44 K–B5 Resigns

44 ..., K–K2 is followed most simply by 45 K–Kt6!, K–K3; 46 P–R4, P–B4; 47 K–Kt5!, K–K4; 48 P–R5, P–B5; 49 P–R6, P–B6; 50 P–R7, P–B7; 51 P–R8(Q) ch!

MOSCOW CHAMPIONSHIP

December

No. 82. *Ruy Lopez*

V. Lublinsky (White) — *M. Botvinnik* (Black)

1 P–K4 P–K4
2 Kt–KB3 Kt–QB3
3 B–Kt5 P–QR3
4 B–R4 Kt–B3
5 B×Kt

This continuation leaves White barely any advantage; its point is that after 5 ..., QP×B; 6 Kt–QB3 Black cannot play P–KB3, which is regarded as the strongest.

5 ... KtP×B
6 Kt–B3 P–Q3
7 P–Q4 Kt–Q2
8 P×P P×P
9 O–O B–Q3

A position has arisen similar to those which were frequently met with in Tchigorin's games playing this opening; as is well known, the open QKt file and the two Bishops completely make up for the weakness of Black's pawns on the Q side. Possibly Black's play has the greater prospects.

10 Kt–K2 O–O
11 Kt–Kt3 R–Kt1

To continue after 12 Kt–B5 with 12 ..., Kt–B4 and then 13 ..., B×Kt and 14 ..., P–K5.

12 P–Kt3 R–K1
13 B–K3 P–Kt3
14 P–B3 P–QR4
15 Q–B2 Q–K2
16 KR–Q1 Kt–B4
17 Kt–K1 Kt–K3

This manœuvre takes a lot of time, and the initiative passes to White. The sound move is 17 ..., B–R3, and if 18 P–QB4, then Black transfers the Knight to his Q5 square without delay.

18 Kt–Q3 Kt–B5
19 P–KB3 B–R3
20 P–QB4 P–QB4

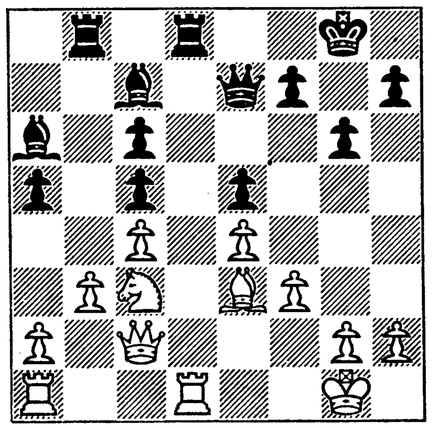
Almost forced!

21 Q–Q2!

Excellently played. In view of the threats 22 Q×RP and 22 Kt×Kt Black must exchange the Knight, after which the QB and QR pawns will be very weak.

21 ... Kt×Kt
22 Q×Kt KR–Q1
23 Kt–K2 P–QB3
24 Kt–B3 B–B2
25 Q–B2

Position after White's 25th move



25 ... R–Q5!!

The only way of saving the B4 pawn. It is difficult for White to exploit his material superiority when there are no open files, and Black has good chances on the K side. Best of all for White would be to take the Rook with the Bishop and then transfer the Knight to Q3.

We must remark that this sacrifice of the exchange (R–Q5!!) is possible only because Black will still have one Rook, without which his Bishops would not be dangerous. This is why Black could not delay with this sacrifice; if White exchanged one pair of Rooks he would ensure himself the win.

26 Kt–K2 B–B1
27 Kt×R BP×Kt
28 B–B2 P–QB4
29 R–KB1 P–B4
30 B–Kt3 B–Q2
31 QR–Q1 P–B5
32 B–B2 P–Kt4
33 P–KKt4

White's nerves fail him. The threat P–Kt5 was very unpleasant, but this weakening of the K side helps Black in his attack.

33 ... P×P e.p.
34 B×P B–R6
35 R–B2 P–R4
36 R(B)–Q2 P–KR5
37 B–B2 R–KB1

Black's attack is developing step by step. White's pieces are placed very unsatisfactorily.

38 R–Q3 R–B5
39 K–R1 K–R2
40 R–KKt1 B–Q1
41 Q–K2 Q–KB2
42 Q–Q1

All White's misfortune consists in the fact that 42 B–K1, P–Kt5; 43 P×P, B×P; 44 R×B, R×R; 45 Q×R, Q–B8 ch; 46 Q–Kt1, Q×R; 47 Q–Kt4, Q–B8 ch; 48 Q–Kt1, Q–K7 leads to the loss of the KP!

42 ... Q–R4
43 B–K3

Otherwise 43 ..., P–Kt5 would be decisive. The endgame with Bishops of opposite colours is a lost one for White, as Black gets two united passed pawns.

43 ... Q×P ch
44 Q×Q R×Q
45 B×KtP R×R
46 B×B R–K6
47 B–Kt6 R×KP
48 B×BP R–K7
49 R–Q1 B–Kt5
50 P–KR3 B×P
51 P–Kt4 B–B4
52 B–Q6 P–Q6
53 P×RP P–R6
Resigns

No. 83. *French Defence*

A. Tolush (White) — *M. Botvinnik* (Black)

1 P–K4 P–K3
2 P–Q4 P–Q4
3 Kt–QB3 B–Kt5
4 P–K5 P–QB4
5 P–QR3 B×Kt ch

Seemingly 5 ..., B–R4 is also perfectly playable.

6 P×B Kt–K2

One of the most telling variations of the French Defence. Tolush goes on to play the opening in accordance with the "last word" of theory, as it stood on January 1st, 1944! Present-day theoreticians recommend 7 Q–Kt4.

7 Kt–B3 Kt–B3
8 P–QR4

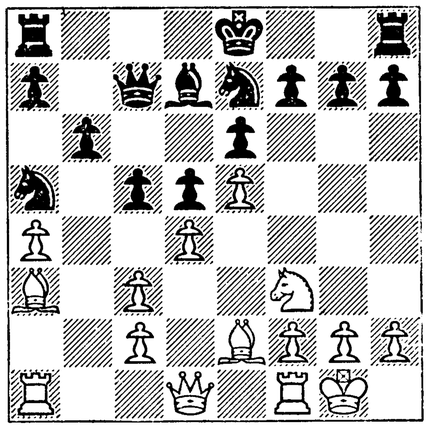
A very useful move, securing a good position at R3 for the Queen's Bishop.

8 ... B–Q2
9 B–K2 Q–B2
10 O–O P–QKt3
11 B–R3 Kt–R4

In a Smyslov–Botvinnik game, played at Sverdlovsk in 1943, this position had 11 ..., P–KR3, which after 12 P×P, P×P; 13 B×P, Kt×P; 14 Kt×Kt, Q×B; 15 Kt×B led to a difficult position for

Black. However, many masters considered that 11 ..., Kt–R4 gives Black good play.

Position after Black's 11th move



12 Kt–Q2!

An important improvement by Tolush. White plans to play 13 Kt–Kt3, provoking the Knight exchange, after which White's pawn formation on the Q side is corrected.

12 ... B×P
13 P–QB4!

Finely played. White clears the central squares, and his two Bishops become a threatening force. On the other hand, there would be little satisfaction for him in 13 B×P, P×B; 14 R×B, because of 14 ..., P–B5, and Black has to all intents and purposes an extra pawn at R2.

13 ... B–Q2

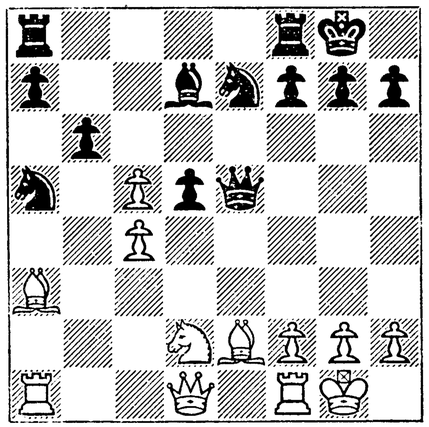
An inexact move, leading to a difficult position. He should have chosen 13 ..., O–O, and if 14 QP×P, KtP×P; 15 P×P, P×P; 16 B×P, Q×B; 17 R×B, then 17 ..., Kt–B3.

14 BP×P KP×P
15 P–QB4 O–O
16 QP×P Q×KP
17 P×KtP

The critical moment. P×QP! is much stronger. If then 17 ..., KtP×P; 18 B×P, Kt–Kt2, White would reply: 19 Kt–B4; or if 17 ..., Kt×QP, then 18 B–B3.

The exchange in the text leads to an equal game.

Position after Black's 16th move



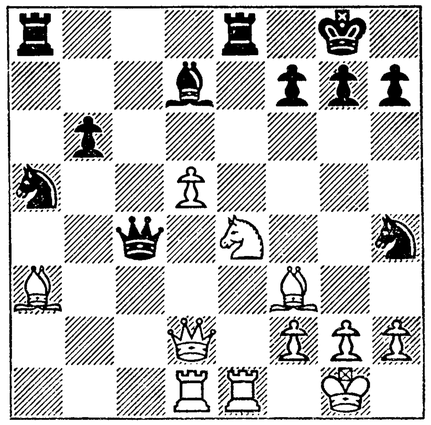
17 ... RP×P
18 B–B3 KR–K1
19 R–K1 Q–B3
20 P×P Kt–B4
21 Kt–K4 Q–Q5
22 Q–K2 Kt–R5

A risky move. 22 ..., Q–B5 is simpler.

23 QR–Q1 Q–B5
24 Q–Q2

Having in mind the continuation, dangerous for Black: 25 B–Kt2 followed by Q–Kt5 and Kt–B6 ch.

Position after White's 24th move



24 ... Q–R5!

A difficult, but the only reply. In view of the potential Knight transfer 25 ..., Kt–B5, White's Bishop at R3 cannot reach the QR1–KR8 diagonal.

25 B–B1 Kt–B5
26 Q–B4

26 Q–Q4 is considerably better. Now the initiative passes to Black.

26 ... Kt–Kt3
27 Q–Kt3 B–B4

Threatening to win a piece: 28 ..., B×Kt; 29 B×B, R×B; and 30 R×R is out of the question because of 30 ..., Q×R ch. The sound defence consists in 28 Kt–B3, but even then Black would retain the advantage.

White's next move is mistaken, as it weakens the first rank.

28 R–Q4 Q–B7
29 P–R4

Hazardous and quite in Tolush's style. He always aims at counterplay.

29 ... R–R8
30 Kt–B6 ch

Loses swiftly, but it is doubtful whether White has any satisfactory defence.

30 ... P×Kt
31 R×R ch K–Kt2
32 P–R5

If 32 B–Q1 the following finish is possible: 32 ..., R×B; 33 R–K1, Kt–Q7; 34 B×Q, R×R ch; with the unavoidable 35 Kt–B8 ch.

32 ... R×B ch
33 K–R2 Q–Kt8
34 Q–Kt8

An interesting position.

34 ... R–R8 ch
35 K–Kt3 Q–Kt8

Black's attack is the more weighty.

36 R–Kt8 ch K–R3
37 B–Kt4 Q–R7 ch
38 K–B3 Kt(B5)–K4 ch
39 K–K2 B×B ch
40 R×B Q×RP
Resigns

A stormy game, but not without mistakes!

NINETEEN FORTY-FOUR

At the beginning of this year I transferred to work in the Technical Department of the Ministry for Electric Power Stations, and moved with my family to Moscow.

In the early summer the first wartime U.S.S.R. Championship Tournament was held, at Moscow. There were many who considered that the fight for first place in this tournament would lie between me and Smyslov. They were right. Smyslov began brilliantly. Our meeting in the middle of the tournament (Game No. 86, *infra*) aroused perhaps even more interest than my meeting with Kotov had in 1939. Smyslov was defeated, and was so demoralized as the result that afterwards he failed to put up any strong opposition to me.

Some months later I completed my task of annotating and editing the games of the Match-Tournament for the Absolute Championship, which perhaps has been my best analytical work to date.

SOVIET CHAMPIONSHIP

June

No. 84. *Nimzo-Indian Defence*

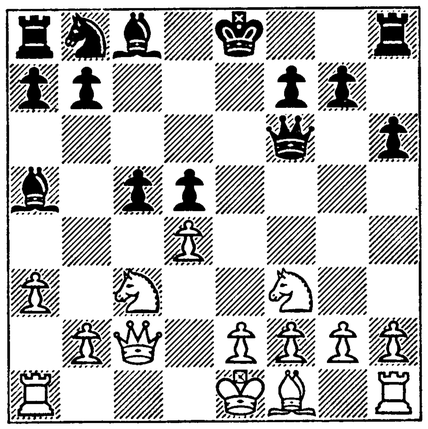
G. Veresov (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4 Q–B2	P–Q4
5 P×P	P×P
6 Kt–B3	

Veresov's own happy idea: in the usual continuation 6 B–Kt5, P–KR3; 7 B–R4 Black is able to play 7 ..., P–QB4 (with the Bishop placed at R4), while if, after 7 ..., P–B4, White exchanges at KB6, he loses a tempo.

But now, if Black plays P–B4, White can exchange at B6 without losing time.

6 ...	P–B4
7 B–Kt5	P–KR3
8 B×Kt	Q×B
9 P–QR3	B–R4

Position after Black's 9th move



A weak reply. Now White has two good possibilities: (1) 10 P×P!, B×Kt ch; 11 Q×B, Q×Q ch; 12 P×Q, and Black must work very hard to win back the pawn. (2) 10 P–QKt4! (pointed out by Veresov immediately the game had ended), P×KtP; 11 Q–R4 ch, Kt–B3 (11 ..., Q–B3; 12 Kt–Kt5, B–Kt3; 13 Kt–K5 is clearly in White's favour); 12 Kt×QP, Q–Q3; 13 RP×P, B×P ch; 14 Kt×B, Q×Kt ch; 15 Q×Q, Kt×Q; 16 K–Q2, and Black's pawns on the Q side may come under attack. So Black should have played 9 ..., B×Kt ch.

In the hope of winning still greater superiority White avoids these variations and goes in for complications. But he chooses such an unfortunate plan that the "complications" prove difficult only for White.

10 O–O–O

Here the King will be far from secure, but most of all White has lost precious time and has not taken the QBP. Of course Black does not miss the chance of eliminating this threat.

10 ...	B×Kt
11 Q×B	P–B5!

The only convincing continuation. As 12 P–QKt3 would be very dangerous for White because his King is on the Q side, he is forced to seek other ways of retaining the initiative. 12 P–K4! suggests itself, in the hope that it will be followed by 12 ..., P×P; 13 Kt–K5! and then 14 B×P; but 12 P–K4 would in fact be met by 12 ..., B–Kt5!; 13 KP×P, O–O; 14 B×P, Kt–Q2; and, despite White's temporary superiority in material, Black's game is to be preferred.

After long consideration White chooses another—and perhaps erroneous—plan, associated with reinforcing the Knight at K5 and advancing pawns on the K side.

12 Q–K3 ch	B–K3
13 Kt–K5	Kt–B3
14 P–KKt4	

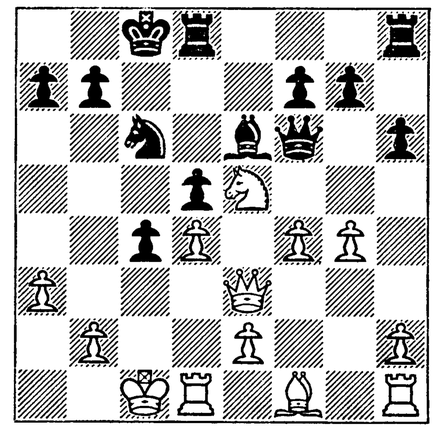
Of course 14 Kt×QBP, P×Kt; 15 P–Q5, O–O–O is in Black's favour. Assuming that Black would Castle short, Veresov begins a pawn advance on the K side.

14 ... O–O–O!

This is now quite obvious! Of course Black does not Castle short, as on that side his King's position would swiftly be shattered.

15 P–B4

Position after White's 15th move



This "energetic" move proves to be a fatal mistake, as it irrevocably weakens K4 and K3 squares along the half-open K file. White still assumes that his central Knight gives him superiority. But in reality Black had to make only three moves (KR–K1, Q–K2 and P–B3), and then White would be left with only the memory of his strongly-placed Knight. If White had foreseen this threat he would not of course have wasted time on 15 P–B4.

It is quite common for a Knight at K5 to lead one into error when estimating a position. On studying Game No. 92, which I played against Lilienthal, a year later, the reader will be convinced that history sometimes repeats itself.

Here the sound move is either 15 B–Kt2, or 15 P–KR4 followed by 16 B–R3.

15 ... KR–K1

Winning a tempo, because of the threat 16 ..., B×P. 15 ..., Q–K2 at once is much weaker, for 16 ..., P–B3 is not playable with the Rook at R1.

White at the moment has no choice, as 16 P–B5, B–Q2 leads to loss of a pawn.

16 Q–KB3	Q–K2
17 P–K3	

In fighting to defend his weak K3 square, White has fallen into such a great error that the decisive blow comes only three moves later—his Queen is cut off from the Q side.

The continuation 17 P–B5, B–Q2; 18 Q×QP, Kt×Kt; 19 P×Kt, B×BP; 20 Q×BP ch, K–Kt1 is also unsatisfactory for White. 17 Kt×Kt, P×Kt is a lesser evil, but this opens the QKt file and leads to new dangers for the White King.

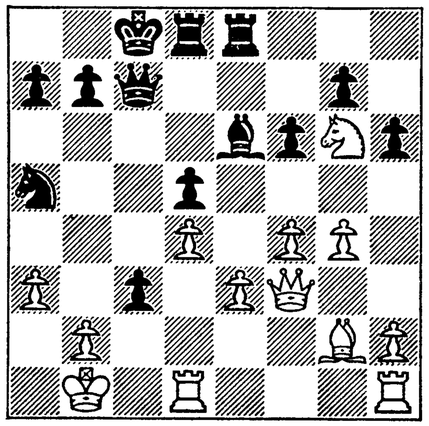
17 ... Kt–R4!

Immediately exploiting White's blunder. At R4 the Knight will be very active; White's central Knight will be driven off to the K side, where now there is a complete lull.

White still cannot continue 18 P–B5 because of 18 ..., B–Q2; 19 Q×QP, Kt–Kt6 ch! and Black wins the Queen.

18 B–Kt2	P–B3
19 Kt–Kt6	Q–QB2
20 K–Kt1	P–B6!!

Position after Black's 20th move



An unexpected stroke; it might seem that so long as the King and Queen are on the B file this move is impossible, because of 21 R–QB1; but White is foiled by the awkward position of his Queen at KB3.

Now Black's QBP threatens to advance farther. 21 P×P loses at once because of 21 ..., Kt–B5, and there is no satisfactory defence against 22 ..., Q–Kt3 ch or 22 ..., B–B2; 23 Kt–R4, R×KP.

So Veresov decides to surrender the exchange in hope of saving himself in the endgame. This, of course, drags out the struggle—for 25 moves—but cannot alter the result.

21 R–QB1	Kt–B5
22 R×P	Kt–Q7 ch

The two Queens are simultaneously doomed, but Black wins the exchange!

23 K–B2	Kt×Q
24 B×Kt	B–B2
25 Kt–R4	R×P
26 R×Q ch	K×R
27 K–Q2	R(Q1)–K1
28 R–B1 ch	K–Kt3
29 R–B3	R×R
30 P×R	P–KKt3
31 Kt–Kt2	K–B2
32 Kt–K3	K–Q3
33 P–KR4	

Despite Black's superiority in pieces he still has to overcome quite a few technical difficulties, owing to his Rook being insufficiently active. Now he experiences some difficulty owing to the weakness of his KRP; so he decides to take steps betimes to defend it.

If White were to play a waiting game the struggle might go on for a long time yet. But during time-trouble for both parties he decided to "fish in troubled waters," and . . . now loses quickly.

33 ...	R–KR1
34 P–R5	P×P
35 P×P	B–K3
36 P–B4	P×P
37 B×KtP	R–QKt1

Now the Rook has gained freedom of action.

38 B–K4	R–Kt7 ch
39 K–B3	R–Kt6 ch
40 K–Q2	R×P
41 P–Q5	R×Kt
42 K×R	

Now in any case White could have resigned; for the time-check was past.

42 ...	B×P
43 B–B2	K–B4
44 B–B5	P–R4
45 B–B2	B–B3
Resigns	

No. 85. *Réti Opening*

Botvinnik (White)	*Flohr* (Black)
1 Kt–KB3	P–Q4
2 P–QB4	P–Q5
3 P–K3	Kt–QB3
4 P×P	Kt×P
5 Kt×Kt	Q×Kt
6 Kt–B3	P–QB3
7 P–Q3	P–K4

Since one of the games in the Alekhine–Euwe return match 7 ..., P–K4 has been recommended as the strongest. It is unquestionably sound, but now I decided to try out a certain "new idea."

8 B–K3	Q–Q1

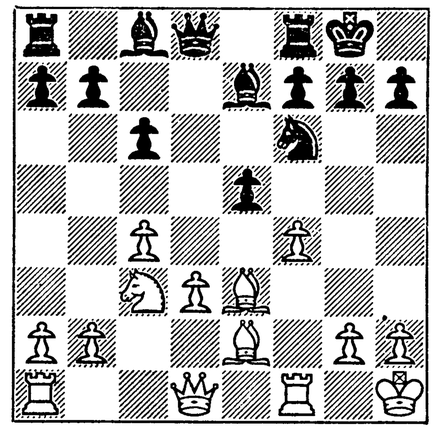
Perhaps 8 ..., Q–Q3 is better.

9 B–K2	Kt–B3
10 O–O	B–K2
11 K–R1	

A little later in this same tournament Lisitsin playing Mikenas continued 11 P–B4 at once. Probably this is more exact, as now Flohr could play 11 ..., B–KB4, achieving satisfactory development.

11 ...	O–O
12 P–B4	

Position after White's 12th move



This is the opening idea I had in mind. The flanking BP is exchanged for the central KP; White obtains a half-open KB file; and, finally, the backward QP will become a strong central pawn.

12 ...	P×P
13 R×P	B–K3
14 P–Q4	Q–Q2

A sound scheme of defence. Black transfers the Bishop to KKt3, after which his K side will be securely covered.

15 B–Q3	B–KKt5
16 Q–Q2	B–R4
17 B–B5	Q–B2
18 QR–KB1	B–Kt3
19 R–R4	

A quite harmless demonstration: after the Bishop's transfer to Kt3 the Black King has become very inaccessible.

19 ...	KR–K1
20 B–B4	Q–Q1
21 B×B	BP×B

Dangerous is 21 ..., RP×B; 22 B–K5; and the Knight at B3 is pinned because of the potential threat R–R8 ch and Q–R6 ch. By keeping the RP Black foils all White's attempts to attack the King. However, arising out of his pawn superiority on the Q side, White has some cause to reckon on success in the endgame.

22 R–R3	Q–Q2
23 P–QR3	

Safeguarding square K4.

23 ...	QR–Q1
24 R–Q3	Q–K3!

Quite in Flohr's style. Black provokes the formation of a passed QP, securely blocks it and develops counter-play with pieces.

25 P–Q5	P×P
26 P×P	Q–R3

As the Rook at KB1 is undefended Black gains a tempo to block the QP.

27 KR–Q1	B–Q3
28 P–R3	P–R3
29 B×B	Q×B
30 R–K3	R×R
31 Q×R	P–QR3

Flohr has always played such positions artistically; take as an example his game against Steiner, at Hastings in 1932/33, and the first game of his match with me in 1933. It would be difficult to improve on the position of White's pieces.

32 Q–Q3	Kt–R4
33 R–K1	Kt–Kt6 ch
34 K–Kt1	R–KB1
35 Q–K3	

35 Kt–K4 should have been played at once.

35 ...	K–R2
36 Kt–K4	Kt×Kt
37 Q×Kt	R–B4

37 ..., R–B5! is stronger, as if 38 Q–Q3, Q–B4 ch, and 39 ..., R–Q5 Black wins a pawn and has even the slightly superior position. The inexact play of both sides at this stage was the result of time trouble.

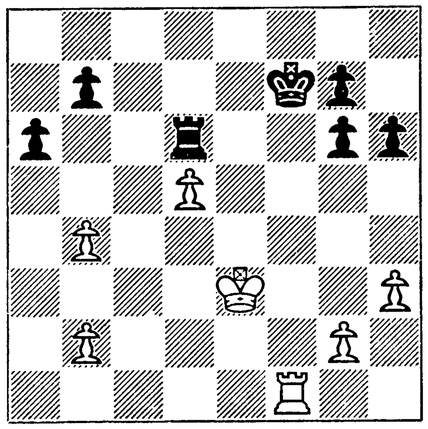
38 R–Q1	R–B3

39 Q–QKt4 Q×Q
40 P×Q R–Q3

The last move in the time-check. It was psychologically difficult to decide on 40 . . ., K–Kt1, as throughout the game Black had aimed to block the QP at Q5; but the King's move would have been better, as, to begin with, the QP could always be halted at Q7; secondly, the Black King would come up in time; and, thirdly, the White King would fail to support the passed pawn.

41 K–B2 K–Kt1
42 K–K3 K–B2
43 R–B1 ch!

Position after White's 43rd move



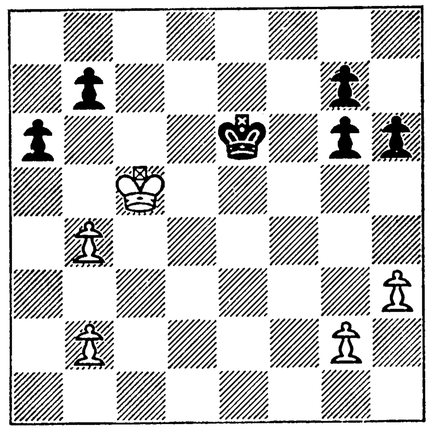
43 . . . R–B3

A blunder, and all the more surprising because it was made immediately after the adjournment, in other words, after there had been opportunity for analysis.

Flohr assumed that after 43 . . ., K–K2; 44 K–Q4, R–Kt3; 45 K–B5, R–Kt4 ch; 46 K–B4, R–Kt3; 47 R–B4 the endgame was a lost one for Black. In reality, after 47 . . ., P–KR4! followed by 48 . . ., R–KB3 Black had every reason to count on a draw.

White could make another attempt to win, transposing play into a pawn endgame by 47 R–K1 ch (instead of 47 R–B4), K–Q2; 48 R–K6, R×R; 49 P×R ch, K×P; 50 K–B5. In that case an exceptionally interesting pawn finish would result.

Position in variation after 50 K–B5



Despite Black's extra pawn White's position is superior because of his King's active position. As will be seen from the following variations, if Black plays a waiting game and defends his Q side with his King, he loses through *Zugszwang*.

(1) 50 . . ., K–Q2; 51 K–Kt6, K–B1; 52 P–R4!!, K–Kt1; 53 P–Kt5, P×P; 54 K×P, K–B2; 55 K–B5, K–Q2; 56 K–Kt6, K–B1; 57 P–QKt3, K–Kt1; 58 P–QKt4, K–R1; 59 K–B7, K–R2; 60 P–Kt5, K–R1; 61 P–Kt6, P–R4; 62 P–Kt3 and wins.

But if Black plays actively, with the object of capturing the White QKtPs at the cost of his own QR and QKtPs, he still loses, as White can capture all Black's K side pawns while preserving his own KKtP.

(2) 50 . . ., P–KKt4; 51 K–Kt6, K–Q4; 52 K×P, K–B5; 53 K×P, K×P; 54 P–KKt4!! (a draw follows 54 K–Kt6, e.g. 54 . . ., K–Kt6; 55 K–B5, K×P; 56 K–Q5, K–B6; 57 K–K6, K–Q5; 58 K–B7, P–R4; 59 K×P, P–Kt5; 60 P×P, P×P; 61 K–Kt6, K–K6; 62 K–B5, K–B7), K–Kt6; 55 K–Kt5, K×P; 56 K–B4, K–B7; 57 K–Q5, K–Q6; 58 K–K6, K–K5; 59 K–B7, K–B6; 60 K×P, and wins.

(3) 50 . . ., K–K4; 51 K–Kt6, K–Q5; 52 K×P, K–B5; 53 K×P, K×P; 54 K–Kt6, K–Kt6; 55 K–B6, K×P; 56 K–Q6, K–B6; 57 K–K6, K–Q5; 58 K–B7, P–Kt4 (58 . . ., K–K6; 59 K×P, K–B7; 60 K×KtP, K×P; 61 P–R4); 59 P–Kt4 and then as in the preceding variation.

However, a certain little known amateur pointed out that Black could save the game with 50 . . ., P–R4!! Then, if White plays 51 K–Kt6 at once (as in the second variation above) Black gets a draw, as White lacks 54 P–Kt4. But if White first plays 51 P–R4, then after 51 . . ., K–K4; 52 K–Kt6, K–Q4; 53 K×P, K–B5; 54 K×P, K×P; 55 K–Kt6, K–Kt6; 56 K–B5, K×P; 57 K–Q4, K–Kt6; 58 K–K5, K–B5; 59 K–K6, K–Q5; 60 K–B7, K–K5; 61 K×KtP(3), K–B5; 62 K×RP, K–Kt6; 63 K–Kt5, K×KtP; 64 P–R5, K–Kt6; 65 K–Kt6, K–Kt5, Black achieves a draw easily.

The pawn endgame which occurs in the text is won comparatively simply.

44 R×R ch P×R
45 P–Kt4!

White immediately takes steps to clear the QKt1–KR7 diagonal for his King.

45 . . . K–K2
46 P–R4 K–Q3
47 K–K4 P–QKt3
48 P–R5 P×P
49 P×P P–QR4
50 K–B5

Here a second solution is possible: 50 P×P, P×P; 51 P–Kt3!, K–B4; 52 K–B5, K×P; 53 K×P, K–Q5; 54 K–Kt6, K–B6; 55 K×P, K×P; 56 K–Kt6, P–R5; 57 P–R6, P–R6; 58 P–R7, P–R7; 59 P–R8 (Q).

50 . . . P×P
51 K×P K×P
52 K–Kt6 K–K3
53 K×RP K–B3
54 P–Kt3 K–B2

Or 54 . . ., P–Kt4; 55 K–R7, K–B2; 56 P–R6. Black's further resistance is pointless.

55 K–Kt5 K–Kt2
56 K–B5 K–R3
57 K–K5 K×P
58 K–Q5 K–Kt4
59 K–B6 K–B4
60 K×P K–K3
61 K–B5 K–Q2
62 K×P K–B3

This position is to be found in all beginners' textbooks.

63 K–R5 K–Kt2
64 K–Kt5 K–R2
65 K–B6 K–R3
66 P–Kt4 K–R2
67 P–Kt5 K–Kt1
68 K–Kt6 Resigns

The value of this game was diminished by mistakes on both sides during the 35th to 40th moves. But for these mistakes it would have been a decidedly interesting endgame!

No. 86. *French Defence*

V. Smyslov (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K3
2 P–Q4	P–Q4
3 Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4 P–K5	P–QB4
5 P–QR3	B×Kt ch
6 P×B	Kt–K2
7 P–QR4	QKt–B3
8 Kt–B3	

I first employed this variation (for Black) in a game against Milner-Barry, at Hastings in 1934. It has since been regularly adopted in master play. Smyslov had frequently expressed his view that the system is

bad for Black, so I now had particular satisfaction in employing it.

8 ... Q–R4
9 B–Q2

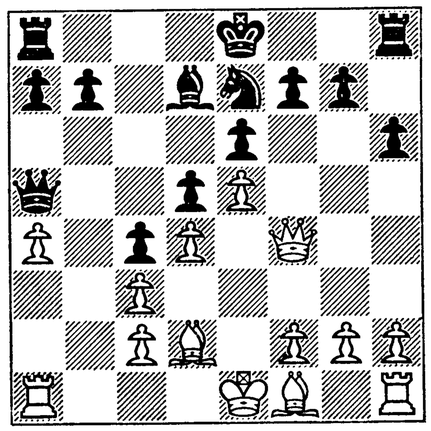
Here 9 Q–Q2, not avoiding a possible exchange of Queens, is logical. But White aims to decide the game by an attack on the K side.

9 ... P–B5
10 Kt–Kt5

I pointed out the manœuvre Kt–Kt5–R3–B4–R5 in 1939, in notes to the Pogrebyssky–Botvinnik game. (See No. 63, *supra*.) Black here does not allow the Knight to reach R5.

10 ... P–KR3
11 Kt–R3 Kt–Kt3
12 Q–B3 B–Q2
13 Kt–B4 Kt×Kt
14 Q×Kt Kt–K2

Position after Black's 14th move



The result of the opening can be summarized as not favourable to White. He must lose his QRP. True, he can launch a pawn attack on the K side, but Black has sufficient defensive resources.

15 P–R4 B×P
16 P–R5 Q–Kt4

Attacking the pawn at QB2.

17 K–Q1 R–QB1

The simplest means of bringing the QR into play. After this White must lose several more tempi in dealing with the attack on his King.

18 B–B1 R–B3
19 B–K2

A number of masters condemned this move and recommended 19 P–Kt4 immediately. I think that if Black plays soundly this is of no essential importance.

19 ... R–R3
20 K–Q2

A great achievement for Black! Now the QB1–KR6 diagonal is closed to White's Bishop.

20 ... O–O

This move is definitely playing into White's hands, as Black is forced into 21 ..., P–B3, and the White Queen gets freedom to move along the KR2–QKt8 diagonal. So far Black was not exposed to any danger; his King was adequately secure in the centre, and instead of playing for a trap (21 B–R3, B×P!; 22 B×Kt, Q–Kt7) he should have played for simplification with 20 ..., Q–Q2 and 21 ..., B–Kt4, or by way of 20 ..., Q–Kt3 and 21 ..., B–Q2.

21 P–Kt4 P–B3
22 P×P R×P
23 Q–B7 R–B2
24 Q–Q8 ch K–R2
25 P–B4!

With the strong threat of P–Kt5–Kt6 ch. After thinking over this position for more than thirty minutes I came to the conclusion that one should play 25 ..., Q–Q2; 26 Q×Q, B×Q; 27 R×R, P×R; 28 K–K3, B–Kt4 with approximate equality, as if the White KKtP advances Black's Knight is always ready to occupy B4.

None the less I decided to try my luck and took a cunning, but extremely dangerous variation.

25 ... Q–R4

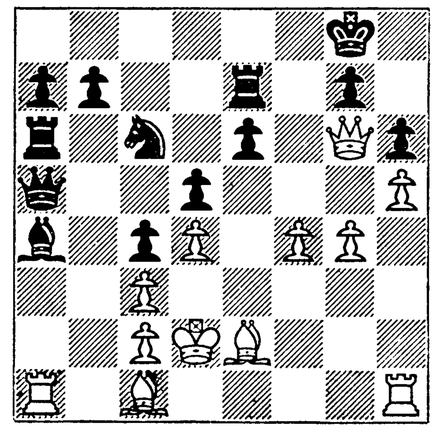
Offering an exchange of Queens without disarranging the pawn formation.

26 Q–Kt8 Kt–B3
27 Q–K8 R–K2
28 Q–Kt6 ch

Smyslov made this move without thinking. Evidently he assumed that 28 Q–KB8 led to an exchange of Queens, while the text move left White the possibility of making a decisive attack on the King. This was a serious error; it was in the very continuation 28 Q–B8, Q–Q1; 29 Q×Q, Kt×Q; 30 P–Kt5, that White retained good prospects, as it would not be so simple to transfer the Black Knight to KB4. The text move draws the White Queen into a trap!

28 ... K–Kt1

Position after Black's 28th move



29 B–R3

White still does not notice the danger threatening his Queen, otherwise he would have played P–Kt5×P at once, so securing the Queen's retreat. True, even in this case Black has the better game, but now his task is simplified.

29 ... P–K4

Very riskily played! At first I intended to play 29 ..., Q–B2, but the variation 30 KR–KB1, Kt–K4; 31 BP×Kt, B–K1; 32 R–B8 ch, K×R; 33 Q–R7 is bad for Black. I should have chosen 29 ..., Q–B2; 30 KR–KB1, Kt–Kt5!; 31 B×Kt, B–K1 and then it is doubtful whether White could save the game.

30 BP×P

This is a decisive error. If he continues 30 QP×P, White should by no means lose. For if Black continued as in the text the White BP would be preserved and would guarantee White equal play.

30 ... Kt×QP
31 B–Kt4 Q–Q1
32 Q×R P×Q
33 P×Kt R–Kt2

The winning move; this is where the lack of the BP tells!

34 R×B Q–Kt4 ch
35 K–Q1 P–QR4

35 ..., P–B6 is also playable. Here there is more than one solution to the problem.

36 B–KB3 R×B
37 B×P ch K–B1
38 R–B1 ch K–K1
39 B–B6 ch K–K2
40 R×R Q×P ch

White sealed 41 K–B1, but did not bother to resume. The struggle developed interestingly, but the game would have been of even greater interest if there had not been errors on both sides in the final stage.

No. 87. *French Defence*

Botvinnik (White)	*Boleslavsky* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K3
2 P–Q4	P–Q4
3 Kt–Q2	Kt–QB3

This defence against the 3 Kt–Q2 variation first appeared in Soviet master play in 1940. Boleslavsky's employment of it is its best recommendation. Unfortunately, in the present game he did not overcome the difficulties of the opening.

4 KKt–B3 Kt–B3
5 P–K5 Kt–Q2

6 Kt–Kt3

The basic idea of the 3 ..., Kt–QB3 defence is a struggle for White's K5. In the present game White attempts to counter this idea with free development of pieces.

6 ... P–B3
7 B–QKt5 B–K2
8 B–KB4

White has achieved a good arrangement of his pieces. Now he can exchange at KB6, as his command of the half-open K file and the KR2–QKt8 diagonal enables him to control his K5.

8 ... O–O
9 P×P P×P

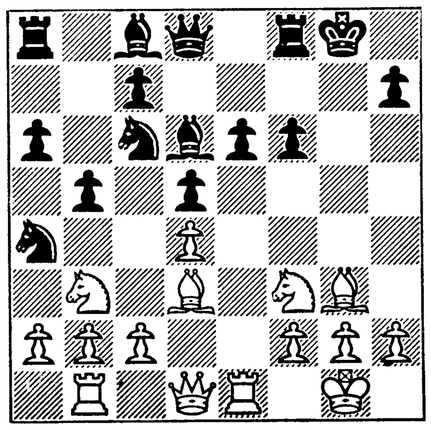
If Black recaptures with a piece, White gets a base at K5. But even now Black is not free from difficulties. To advance the KP would lead to White's capture of KB5, and it is impossible to advance the BP because it would weaken square K4.

10 O–O Kt–Kt3
11 R–K1 B–Q3
12 B–Kt3 P–QR3
13 B–Q3 Kt–R5

Not only attacking the KtP, but preventing the possible Kt–B5.

14 R–Kt1 P–Kt4

Position after Black's 14th move



It would seem that Black has played quite sensibly, for he prevents the undermining move P–QB4. But this is offset by the weakening of his QB4. So long as the Bishop is at Q3 this weakness is not perceptible; Black assumed that if White took the Bishop he would reply P×B, and all would be well. But by tactical devices White soon succeeds in forcing Black to take at Q3 with his Queen.

15 P–B3 B–Q2
16 Kt–R4!

A vital moment. Exploiting the fact that the Black KP cannot be advanced because it would weaken square KB4, White starts active operations against the Black King.

16 ... R–B2
17 R–K3 R–Kt2
18 Q–K2

A fresh unpleasantness for Black: a sacrifice of exchange at K6 may become possible. If in doing so White succeeds in winning two pawns, it will be clearly to his advantage, taking into account the weakness arising at Black's KB4.

18 ... Q–KB1
19 B×B Q×B

Sad, but necessary. 19 ..., P×B might be followed by 20 R×KP, B×R; 21 Q×B ch, and one of the two QPs is lost. So Black has suffered defeat in the fight for his QB4.

20 R–Kt3 R×R

This too is necessary. Otherwise Black is unable to parry the threat: 21 B×P ch, K×B; 22 Q–R5 ch, K–Kt1; 23 Kt–Kt6.

21 RP×R Q–K2
22 R–K1 Q–Kt2
23 Q–B2 Kt–Q1
24 Kt–B1

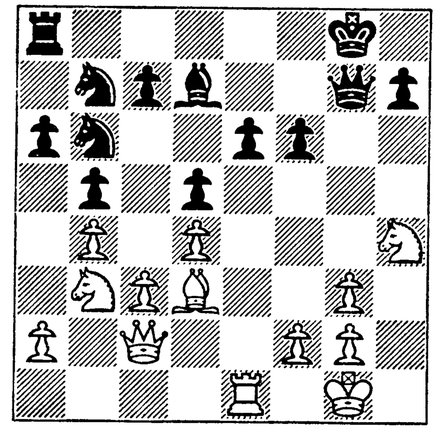
Preventing the QBP's advance to B4, and if opportunity offers, planning to carry through the manœuvre Kt–K2–B4.

24 ... R–B1
25 P–Kt3 Kt–Kt3
26 P–QKt4 R–R1
27 Kt–Kt3

After 27 Kt–K2 Black would probably decide on 27 ..., P–K4, and because of the awkward position of the Knight at K2 White's superiority would be less perceptible.

27 ... Kt–Kt2

Position after Black's 27th move



An imperceptible error which proves to be decisive. Now Black's Bishop is thrust back to QB1. He should have played 27 ..., Kt–R5.

28 Kt–B5 Kt×Kt
29 KtP×Kt Kt–R5

29 ..., Kt–B5 gives stronger resistance, as the Knight would be more actively placed.

30 P–B6 B–B1

Alas! 30 ..., B×P; 31 R×KP, and White has KB5.

31 P–QB4!

Getting rid of the weakness at QB3 and supporting the pawn at QB6.

31 ... KtP×P
32 B×P Kt–Kt3
33 B–Q3 R–Kt1
34 Q–B5 Q–B1

Black hopes to ransom himself at the cost of the KRP and bring about the endgame. In fact he does succeed in exchanging Queens, but in circumstances unfavourable to himself.

35 B×P ch K–Kt2
36 Kt–B5 ch! P×Kt
37 R–K7 ch K–R1
38 B–Kt6 B–K3
39 R×B Q×Q
40 P×Q Kt–R5

It was high time to bring down the curtain.

41 B×P Kt–B6
42 R–K7 Kt–Kt4
43 B–Q3 R–QB1
44 P–R4 Kt–Q5
45 B×P Kt×P
46 R–K6 Resigns

No. 88. *Réti Opening*

G. Lisitsin (White) — *M. Botvinnik* (Black)

1 Kt–KB3 P–Q4
2 P–QKt3 P–QB4
3 B–Kt2

A well-known opening error. It is strange that Lisitsin should have committed it, for he had thoroughly studied the Réti Opening.

3 ... P–B3

White cannot prevent the formation of Black's pawn centre.

4 P–K3 P–K4
5 B–Kt5 ch

Or 5 P–Q4, BP×P; 6 P×P, P–K5; 7 KKt–Q2, P–B4, in Black's favour.

5 ... Kt–B3
6 O–O B–Q3
7 B–K2

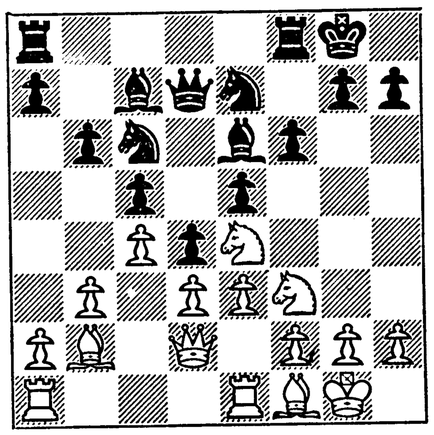
White wants to play P–Q3 and at the same time preserve his King's Bishop, so this move is perfectly natural.

7 ...	KKt–K2
8 P–Q3	B–K3
9 QKt–Q2	P–QKt3

As a prophylactic against P–QB4 followed by Kt–K4, in reply to which the Bishop's retreat to B2 is now possible.

10 R–K1	Q–Q2
11 B–KB1	O–O
12 P–B4	P–Q5
13 Kt–K4	B–QB2
14 Q–Q2	

Position after White's 14th move



Imprudently played. Now Black can intensify the pressure in the centre. White should first have played 14 P×P.

14 ...	B–Kt5
15 B–K2	P–B4
16 Kt–Kt3	P–K5

Black had a good choice:

(1) 16 ..., P–B5; 17 P×BP, P×P; 18 Kt–K4, Kt–Kt3; and 19 ..., Kt–K4.

(2) 16 ..., P×P; 17 P×P, B×Kt; 18 B×B, P–K5.

(3) 16 ..., P×P; 17 P×P, P–B5; and 18 ..., Kt–B4.

The text continuation seems the most promising, as Black gets a passed QP.

17 P×KP	B×Kt(Kt3)

Very attractive is 17 ..., BP×P; 18 Kt×KP, B×Kt; 19 P×B (dangerous: 19 B×B, R×B), Kt–Kt3 with a strong attack.

18 RP×B	BP×P
19 Kt–R2	B–B4
20 P–KKt4	B–Kt3
21 Kt–B1	R–B2

Not an entirely successful manœuvre; 21 ..., QR–Q1 and then 22 ..., Kt–K4 is more logical.

22 Kt–Kt3	QR–KB1
23 R–KB1	Q–B2
24 QR–K1	P–Q6
25 B–Q1	Kt–K4

Black needs only to make one more move — Kt(K2)–QB3 — for White to be in *Zugszwang*. However, Lisitsin finds a shrewd way of freeing his pieces.

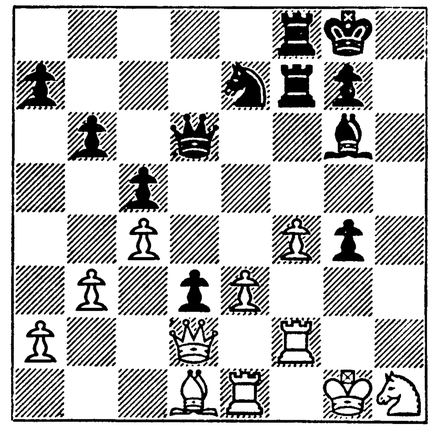
26 B×Kt!	Q×B
27 Kt–R1!	

Black is not able to prevent 28 P–B4, after which chances are almost equal. So he opens up the game on the K side, in order to create a few tactical complications.

27 ...	P–KR4
28 P–B4	P×P e.p.
29 P×BP	P×P
30 P–B4	Q–Q3
31 R–B2	

So far Lisitsin had conducted a difficult defence very well, but now his positional sense betrayed him. He evidently assumed that the pawn at KKt5 could be won at any time, so he did not play B×P, though this was the one move that would have made it difficult for Black to set up direct threats. Now Black exploits the existence of this very pawn, and develops vehement pressure.

Position after White's 31st move



31 ...	B–K5!

Now already it would be dangerous to take the pawn!

32 Kt–Kt3	B–Kt2
33 R–R2	

White hopes that the blocked pawn will securely cover his King. The ensuing exchange eliminates the block, and White loses at once.

33 ...	Kt–B4
34 Kt×Kt	R×Kt
35 R–R4	P–Kt6
36 R–B1	

To render the great diagonal harmless by 37 B–B3, but . . .

36 ...	P–KKt4!
37 R–Kt4	Q–R3
38 B–B3	Q–R6!!

Just at the right moment! The White Rook has got lost in the pawn "forest."

39 Q–Kt2	Q×R
40 B×Q	B×Q
41 K×B	R(4)–B3
Resigns	

NINETEEN FORTY-FIVE

In the spring of this year the 14th Championship of the Soviet Union was held, at Moscow. This time Smyslov was not particularly successful, and my chief rival was Boleslavsky. In the middle of the tournament I succeeded in defeating him (Game No. 91, *infra*) and this was the decisive factor in the struggle.

In September a match was played by wireless between the Soviet Union and the U.S.A. Unfortunately the technical and organizational aspects of wireless matches are still so far from perfect (forty moves require not five, but eleven to twelve hours' play) that such contests are hardly likely to replace play over the one board or to satisfy the chess master to any extent. Both my games with Denker (Nos. 93 and 94, *infra*) were, however, played at such a speed that they closely approached normal conditions. Our first game was particularly successful from my viewpoint: it was noteworthy that even the most experienced masters commenting on the play in both New York and Moscow estimated the position down to the 14th–16th moves as in White's favour!

The wireless match ended in the complete defeat of the American team.

U.S.S.R. CHAMPIONSHIP

June

No. 89. *French Defence*

A. Tolush (White)	*M. Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K3
2 P–Q4	P–Q4
3 Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4 P–K5	P–QB4
5 P–QR3	B×Kt ch
6 P×B	Kt–K2
7 Kt–B3	

If 7 Q–Kt4 is not played, then probably 7 P–R4 at once is more exact.

7 ...	Q–R4
8 B–Q2	

A serious decision. To avoid a possible exchange of Queens after 8 Q–Q2, White places the Bishop in an obviously disadvantageous position. In this variation the Queen's Bishop is best placed on the QR3–KB8 diagonal; later White will have to spend two tempi transferring the Bishop to QR3.

8 ...	P–B5
9 P–QR4	

Although this pawn may now be lost, the move is necessary in order to secure QR3 for the Q's Bishop; otherwise 9 ..., Q–R5 would follow.

9 ...	Kt–Q2
10 B–K2	

White's opening plan is too slow: 10 Kt–Kt5 is more energetic, and if 10 ..., P–QR3 then Kt–R3–B4–R5.

10 ...	Kt–QKt3

In the Smyslov–Botvinnik game (No. 86, *supra*) the RP was captured by B–Q2×RP. The manœuvre Kt–Q2–Kt3×RP has the advantage that at R5 the Knight is well placed.

11 O–O	Kt×P
12 Kt–R4	

An unfortunate sally. As the result of the exchange of Knights Black's RP is transferred to Kt3, and the break-through P–B4–B5 becomes practically impossible. So for some time White can attack only with pieces, a sure sign that he has not found a sound plan in this variation of the French Defence.

12 ...	Kt–KKt3
13 Kt×Kt	RP×Kt
14 R–K1	B–Q2
15 B–KB1	P–QKt4!

Despite White's unenterprising play, it would be wrong to presume that Black's task is simple. White already intended to transfer his Bishop to the effective diagonal, by means of 16 R–K3 and B–B1–R3.

The position is closed to such an extent that it is extremely difficult for Black to exploit his material superiority. Difficult, but possible! Now he is preparing a pawn advance on the Q side, so the white Rook at K1 will be forced to take up a passive position.

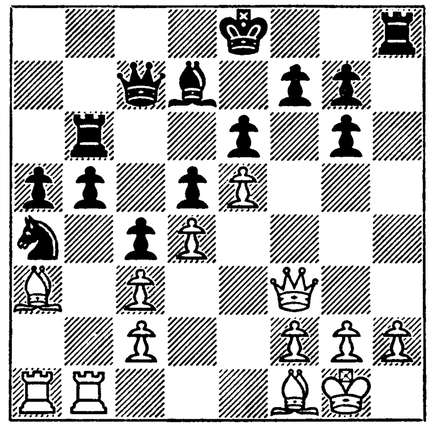
16 Q–B3	QR–Kt1
17 KR–Kt1	Q–B2
18 B–B1!	

After all White succeeds in transferring the Bishop to R3, preventing the advance of the QKtP and so averting immediate catastrophe.

18 ...	P–R4
19 B–R3	R–Kt3!

The winning plan is now clear. Black sacrifices the Rook for White's Queen's Bishop, in the final account getting two pawns in exchange for the loss. Without his good Bishop White cannot prevent the exploitation of Black's pawn superiority on the Q side.

Position after Black's 19th move



20 Q–Kt3	Q–Q1
21 B–Q6	

White assists in the execution of Black's plan, but to be fair we must remark that otherwise, with 21 ..., Q–Kt1 and the threat of P–Kt5 Black would in any case have forced B–Q6.

21 ...	R×B
22 P×R	B–B3
23 P–R3	K–Q2

After White's 23rd a fine variation is possible: 23 ..., Q–R5; 24 Q–K5, Q–B3; 25 Q×Q, P×Q; 26 R×Kt, P×R; 27 R–Kt8 ch, K–Q2; 28 R×R, P–R6, and Black queens his pawn. However, White could easily avoid this variation.

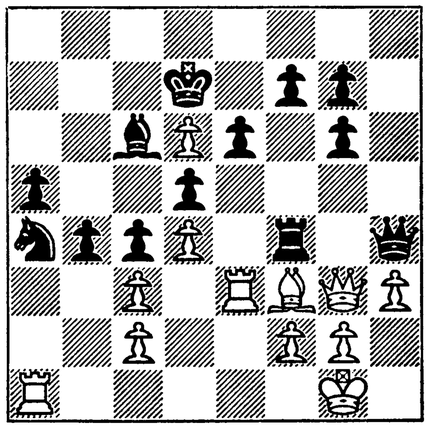
24 R–K1	Q–R5
25 Q–K5	Q–B3
26 Q–Kt3	R–R5!

With this manœuvre Black parries the transfer of the White Rook to B3 and, in addition, prepares to advance P–QKt5, which, in conjunction with the attack on the QP, becomes decisive.

27 R–K3	R–B5
28 B–K2	Q–R5
29 B–B3	P–QKt5!

Both 30 Q–R2, Q–B3; 31 P×P, P×P; 32 R–Kt1, Q×P and 30 P×P, P×P; 31 R–Kt1, Q×Q; 32 P×Q, R×P; 33 R×P, K×P; are bleak prospects. In the latter case Black would quickly get two united passed pawns. Though beautiful, 30 B×P, P×B; 31 R–K7 ch, K×P is also bad.

Position after Black's 29th move



30 Q×Q	R×Q
31 P–Kt3	

Hoping for 31 ..., R×RP; 32 P×P, P×P; 33 R–Kt1. Even so 31 P×P, P×P; 32 R–Kt1, R×P; 33 R×P, as pointed out in the preceding note, is rather better.

31 ...	R–R1
32 P×P	P×P
33 R–Kt1	R–QKt1
34 P–R4	R–Kt2

Preparing Kt–B6.

35 K–R2	K×P
36 P–Kt4	Kt–B6
37 R–QR1	

After 37 R–Kt2, P–B3 and then ..., P–K4 Black wins quickly. Now he captures the QR file.

37 ...	Kt–Kt4
38 R–Q1	R–R2
39 P–R5	P–Kt4
40 K–Kt2	R–R7

Here the game was adjourned. White cannot defend the QBP. He sealed 41 B–K2, but then resigned without resuming play.

The game was awarded the share of the 2nd–3rd prizes for the best games in the tournament.

No. 90. *Sicilian Defence*

Romanovsky (White)	*Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–QB4
2 Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3 P–Q4	P×P
4 Kt×P	Kt–B3
5 Kt–B3	P–Q3
6 B–Kt5	

This system, including Castling on the Q side, was worked out by the Soviet master, Rauzer.*

6 ... P–K3
7 B–Kt5

Romanovsky rejects 7 Q–Q2 followed by 8 O–O–O. But if White Castles short there is little point in 6 B–Kt5. Nor can the text move give White any advantage. In general it can be said that B–Kt5 in the Sicilian Defence is of benefit only in exceptional cases, as it leads either to simplifications favourable to Black, or to a loss of tempo.

7 ... B–Q2
8 O–O B–K2
9 K–R1 P–KR3

9 ..., O–O at once is simpler and better. But as White's Bishop is placed unfortunately at QKt5, 9 ..., P–R3 has not spoilt anything yet.

10 B–K3 P–R3

Now this is simply feeble! The right move is 10 ..., O–O, and if 11 P–B4, then 11 ..., Kt×Kt; 12 Q×Kt, B×B; 13 Kt×B, P–Q4! and Black's game is even to be preferred. Now the ordinary Scheveningen Variation is obtained, with the only difference that Black's position has been weakened by P–KR3 and the attack P–Kt4–Kt5 may be quite dangerous.

11 B–K2 P–K4

Making an attempt to change over to the Boleslavsky Variation (1 P–K4, P–QB4; 2 Kt–KB3, Kt–QB3; 3 P–Q4, P×P; 4 Kt×P, Kt–B3; 5 Kt–B3, P–Q3; 6 B–K2, P–K4) but in the text position this is of doubtful expediency.

12 Kt–Kt3 O–O
13 Kt–Q5

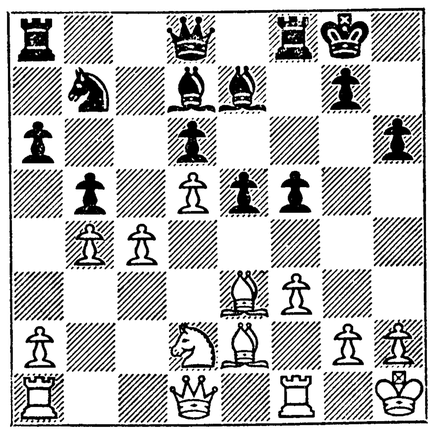
13 P–B4, as in the Botvinnik–Boleslavsky game (Sverdlovsk, 1943) is more dangerous for Black. Now Black could reply 13 ..., Kt×KP, for after 14 B–Kt6, Q–B1; 15 P–KB3, Kt–B3; 16 Kt×B ch, Kt×Kt; 17 Q×P, Q×BP White achieves nothing. The continuation Black chooses leads to a difficult position for him.

13 ... Kt×Kt
14 P×Kt Kt–R4
15 Kt–Q2!

Black's Knight is pressed back to Kt2, where its activity will be at the minimum.

15 ... P–QKt4
16 P–QKt4 Kt–Kt2
17 P–QB4 P–B4
18 P–B3

Position after White's 18th move



The critical point of the game: White passes the initiative to Black. 18 P–B4, B–B3; 19 R–B1, KP×P; 20 B×P, P×P; 21 Kt×P, B–Kt4; 22 B–K3 looks more energetic, and then Black's position is far from happy because of the unfortunate position of his Knight at Kt2 and the potential 23 Kt–Kt6.

Now Black offers an exchange of Bishops, in order to get rid of the most unpleasant of White's minor pieces, his Queen's Bishop.

18 ... B–Kt4
19 Q–Kt3

The exchange of Bishops is unavoidable. If 19 B–Kt1, Black easily deals with the threat P–QB5, as he would control his QB8 square.

19 ... B×B
20 Q×B Q–Kt4

Weak is 20 ..., P×P; 21 Kt×P, B–Kt4; 22 KR–K1, R–B1; 23 Kt–Kt6, R–QB2; 24 B×B!, P×B; 25 P–R4, P×P; 26 R×P, and one cannot see how to make the Knight at Kt2 more active.

Of course it was difficult to foresee all the consequences of 21 P–KB4, but Black assumed that in the ensuing complications the opportunity would arise of exploiting the defenceless state of White's Bishop and Knight. White in turn was quite prepared for these complications, as the exchange of Queens would lead to an approximately equal endgame.

21 P–B4 KP×P

Necessary. Otherwise, after 21 ..., Q–K2; 22 P×KP, QP×P; 23 P–B5 White has decisive superiority.

22 Q–Kt6!!

An interesting move. However, Black finds a saving manœuvre, based on the defenceless state of White's minor pieces.

22 ... QR–Kt1!
23 Q×RP

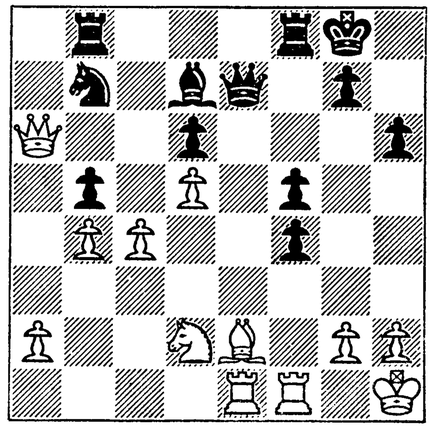
Black's position would seem to be hopeless, as White has considerable superiority on the Q side, but . . .

23 ... Q–K2!!

. . . unexpectedly the White Queen is in a critical situation. For the moment White has to defend the Bishop at K2.

24 QR–K1

Position after White's 24th move



Evidently, until the last moment White had no inkling of Black's design. The commentators condemned Romanovsky for this move, and probably without justification. Of course, White could save his Queen by 24 KR–K1, Q–K6; 25 Kt–B1, Q–B7; 26 Q–R3 (the variation 26 B–B3, R–QR1; 27 Q×Kt, R–R2; 28 R–K2, Q–Q5; 29 R–Q1, Q×R; 30 Q×R, Q×Kt ch; 31 Q–Kt1, Q×Q ch; 32 K×Q is rather in Black's favour) but after 26 ..., KR–K1; 27 Q–KB3, Black has a choice between an approximately equal endgame (27 ..., Q×Q) and a complicated middle game (27 ..., Q–Kt3; 28 P×P, R–K5; 29 P–QR3, QR–K1).

24 ... Q–K6

Now White has to defend a second piece!

25 Kt–B3 R–R1!

An unpleasant surprise! Presumably White was counting only on

* It is now known as the "Rauzer Attack."

25 ..., Q–B6, which would not achieve its end because of 26 P–QR3.

26 Q×Kt R–R2

Black has been rid of his one weakness, the inactive Knight.

White should have continued 27 B–Q1, R×Q; 28 R×Q, P×R; 29 P–B5, P×P; 30 P×P, R–QB2; 31 P–B6, B×P; 32 P×B, R×P; 33 B–Kt3 ch, K–R2; 34 Kt–Q4, R–Q3; 35 Kt×P, R–Q7, and obviously the outcome would have been a draw. However, the unexpected turn of events threw White off his balance to such an extent that he overlooked one intermediate move.

27 B–Q3 R×Q

28 R×Q P×P!

It is pardonable not to notice such a surprise. Now both 29 B×P, P×R; and the text move, are hopeless.

29 R–K7 P×B
30 Kt–K1 R–KB2
31 R×R K×R
32 Kt×P B–Kt4
33 KR–Q1 B×Kt
34 R×B R×P
35 R–Q1 R–R5
36 R–Q2 K–B3
37 P–KR4 P–Kt3

To reply to 38 R–K2 with 38 ..., R–K5!

38 K–Kt1 K–K4
Resigns

No. 91. *Ruy Lopez*

Botvinnik (White)	*Boleslavsky* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K4
2 Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3 B–Kt5	P–QR3
4 B–R4	Kt–B3
5 O–O	P–Q3
6 P–B3	B–Q2
7 P–Q4	P–KKt3

Black avoids the Kecskemét Variation which may follow 7 ..., B–K2. The development of the Bishop at KKt2 has the defect that by exchanging the centre pawns, White may restrict the activity of Black's King's Bishop.

8 QKt–Q2 Q–K2

Well played. The KP was already under threat because of 9 B×Kt. Now Black will succeed in completing his development safely.

9 R–K1 B–Kt2
10 Kt–B1 O–O
11 B–Kt5 P–R3
12 B–R4

It is not easy for Black to defend himself against the manœuvre Kt–K3–Q5; the inviting 12 ..., P–Kt4 would lead to an irrevocable weakening of his white squares.

12 ... Q–K1!

With the idea of winning a pawn by 13 ..., Kt×QP; 14 B×B, Kt×Kt ch; 15 Q×Kt, Kt×B; and also of transferring the Knight to B5. White should have calmly replied 12 K–R1, parrying the first threat and taking no notice of the other. The text retreat of the Bishop eases Black's defence.

13 B–B2 Kt–KR4
14 Kt–K3 Kt–K2
15 P×P!

This guarantees White a small but undoubted positional superiority. The Bishop at Kt2 is shut out of play, and the struggle for the open Q file should end in White's favour, as it is easier for him to double his Rooks.

15 ... P×P
16 B–KKt3!

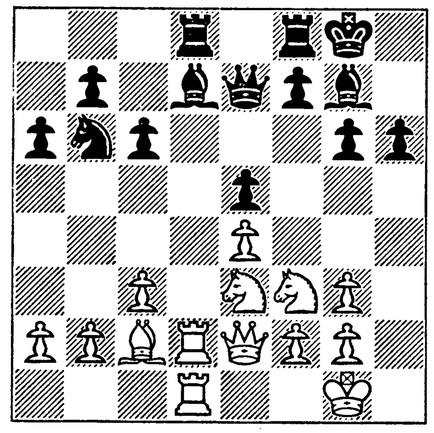
Black has again to look to the defence of his KP; so he is forced into the following exchange. The attendant transfer of the RP to Kt3 makes it difficult for Black to get active play on the K side.

16 ... Kt×B
17 RP×Kt R–Q1
18 Q–K2 Kt–B1

Boleslavsky's decision to keep control of Q4 lies behind his next move, 19 ..., P–QB3. It is difficult to recommend anything better for Black. 18 ..., B–Kt4 would be met by 19 P–B4, and if 18 ..., B–K3, then B–Kt3, and the Bishop exchange suits White.

19 QR–Q1 P–QB3
20 R–Q2 Q–K2
21 KR–Q1 Kt–Kt3

Position after Black's 21st move



Black evidently had no suspicion of the gathering danger. The text move entails an advance of the pawns on the Q side, and White's advantage becomes decisive. Black should have played 21 ..., P–QKt4; though, truly, after 22 P–QKt4 followed by B–Kt3 and Kt–K1–Q3–B5 White would still have the advantage.

22 P–QKt4! B–K3

Bad is 22 ..., P–KB4 because of 23 P×P, P×P; 24 R×B, R×R; 25 Kt×BP and White develops a strong attack.

23 B–Kt3 R×R

Alas! Black cannot contest the open file, as his King's Bishop must guard the KP.

24 Q×R B×B
25 P×B Q–K3
26 P–B4 B–B3
27 P–B5!

This leads to White's invasion of the seventh rank and capture of a pawn.

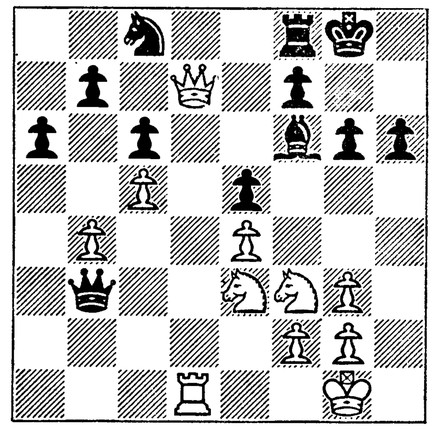
27 ... Kt–B1

The continuation 27 ..., R–Q1; 28 Q×R ch, B×Q; 29 R×B ch, K–Kt2; 30 P×Kt is hopeless for Black.

28 Q–Q7 Q×P

If Black had played 28 ..., R–Q1, White had a choice between the continuation 29 Q×Q, R×R ch; 30 Kt×R, B×Q; 31 Kt–K3, followed by capture of the KP, and the variation: 29 Q×KtP, R×R ch; 30 Kt×R, Kt–K2; 31 Kt–K3, Q×P; 32 Q–Kt8 ch, K–Kt2; 33 Kt–Kt4, also with adequate superiority.

Position after Black's 28th move



29 Q×KtP B–Kt4

This is still better. 29 ..., Kt–K2 is bad because of 30 R–Q6, and 31 Kt–Kt4.

30 Kt×B P×Kt
31 Q×RP Kt–K2
32 Q–Kt7 R–K1

33 Q–Q7 K–B1

Black is defending himself dourly, but of course it is too late to save the game.

34 Q–Q6 Q×P
35 Kt–Kt4!

This should have led to a quick win.

35 ... R–R1
36 Q×KP

White could have settled the issue at once with 36 Kt×KP, and if 36 ..., Q×KP, then 37 Q–B6, Q–B4; 38 Kt–Q7 ch. After White's inexact move the struggle is prolonged a little.

36 ... Q–Kt6!
37 R–Q7 Kt–Kt1
38 Q–Q6 ch

38 K–R2 is stronger.

38 ... K–Kt2
39 Q–Q4 ch

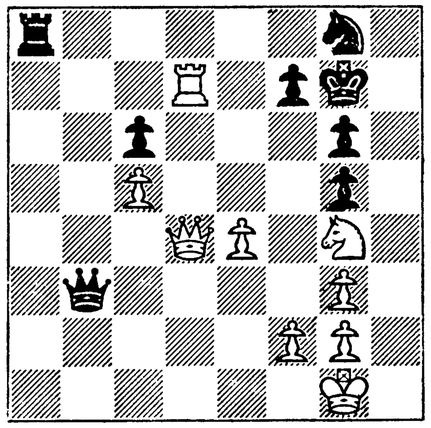
It is interesting to note that the apparently strong 39 Kt–K5, after 39 ..., Kt–B3!!; 40 R–Q8 (40 R×P ch, Q×R; 41 Kt×Q, R–R8 ch; 42 K–R2, Kt–Kt5 ch; 43 K–R3, Kt×BP ch; 44 K–R2, R–R8 mate), R×R; 41 Q×R, Q–Kt8 ch; 42 K–R2, Q×P; 43 Q–B7, Q–Q4 leads only to a draw. This interesting analysis was made by G. Ravinsky.

No. 92. *Queen's Gambit Declined*

Lilienthal (White)	*Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	P–QB3
4 Kt–B3	Kt–B3
5 P×P	

In previous games against me Lilienthal had played 5 P–K3 or 5 B–Kt5 in this position. This time he chose opening play in the style of the Carlsbad Variation.

Position after White's 39th move



39 ... K–R2
40 Kt–B6 ch Kt×Kt
41 Q×Kt K–Kt1

If 41 ..., R–B1 the best reply is 42 P–K5.

42 K–R2 R–KB1
43 Q×BP!

Decides at once, as the passed pawn inevitably advances. The point of the situation is that after 43 ..., Q–Kt7!; 44 Q–Q6!!, Q×P; 45 P–B6, K–Kt2; 46 Q×R ch!! Black is left without his Rook.

43 ... K–Kt2
44 Q–Q6 Q–Kt8
45 Q–Q4 ch K–R2
46 P–B6 Resigns

46 ..., R–R1 is followed by at least 47 Q×R ch.

5 ... KP×P
6 B–Kt5 P–KR3
7 B×Kt

A serious, and surely unjustified decision. If White did not want to withdraw the Bishop to R4, 7 B–B4 is quite acceptable. Now Black with his two good Bishops can face the future with confidence.

7 ... Q×B
8 Q–Kt3 B–Q3!

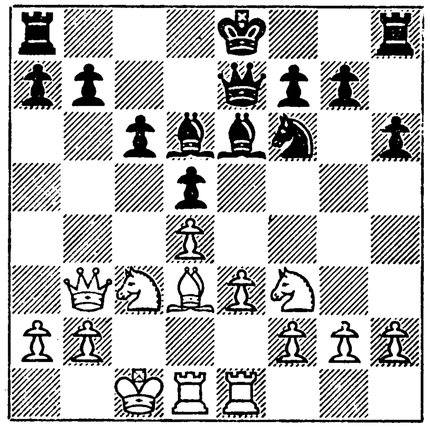
After this it is clear that White has no advantage whatever. His only chance of active play is 9 P–K4, but then 9 ..., P×P; 10 Kt×P, Q–K2; 11 O–O–O, B–B5 ch, and the White King cannot retreat because of 12 ..., Q×Kt ch; he would have to resort to the Knight to protect against the check, and in that case White's position would be inferior.

9 P–K3 QKt–Q2
10 B–Q3 Q–K2

Necessary. The Knight must be transferred to B3 to control K5, while the Queen will guard the KtP, after which it will be possible to develop the Queen's Bishop.

11 O–O–O Kt–B3
12 KR–K1 B–K3

Position after Black's 12th move



It was not easy to find the best plan here. As a rule, in such positions it is disadvantageous to allow White's Knight to be established at K5, and so 12 ..., O–O or 12 ..., Kt–K5 seems more natural. But if 12 ..., O–O; 13 P–KR3! White has not bad attacking prospects, while after 12 ..., Kt–K5; 13 B×Kt, P×B; 14 Kt–Q2, B–Kt5; 15 P–B3, P×P; 16 P×P, B–K3; 17 P–Q5 White has outstripped Black in development.

13 Q–B2 O–O–O
14 Kt–K5

An inviting, but completely unsound plan. At K5 the Knight will be out of touch with the course of the game. To be fair we must observe that it was difficult to foresee that!

14 ... K–Kt1
15 P–B4

"If you go a mile, you must go two." But what in general is White to do? 15 Kt–R4, recommended by Lisitsin ("14th Soviet Chess Championship", special issue No. 7) with the object of preventing 15 ..., P–QB4, is based on a miscalculation, as after 15 Kt–R4, B×Kt; 16 P×B, Kt–Kt5; 17 P–B4, Kt×RP White is a pawn down.

15 ... P–B4

It is just because of the Knight's position at K5 that this move is so strong: 16 P×P is met by 16 ..., B×Kt; 17 P×B, Kt–Q2; 18 Kt–Kt5, R–QB1. White cannot establish the Knight at Q4, e.g. 16 Kt–Kt5, P–B5!; 17 Q–R4, P–R3; 18 Kt×B, P×B.

16 K–Kt1 P–B5
17 B–B5

Many masters condemned this move, and recommended 17 B–K2 instead. I think that is even worse, for after 17 B–K2, P–KKt3!; 18 P–KKt4, P–KR4; 19 P–KR3, P×P; 20 P×P, R–R7 White has a very difficult game.

17 ... B×B
18 Q×B B–Kt5
19 Q–B2 R–Q3

Not 19 ..., Kt–K5, because of 20 Kt×P!, R×Kt; 21 Q×Kt, KR–Q1 (21 ..., Q–K3; 22 P–B5); 22 R–K2, P–B3; 23 P–QR3.

20 R–K2 B×Kt.

Strategically, Black's game is won as White's K4 is irrevocably weak. White will have to take steps to exchange the "proud" Knight at K5 for its Black opposite. Alas, as will

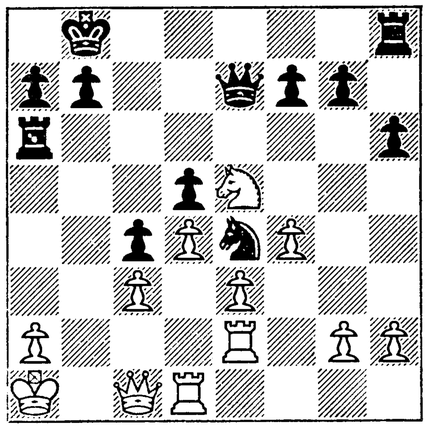
be seen from what follows, he fails to do this.

21 P×B

After 21 Q×B Black wins by advancing his Q side pawns. Now White comes under attack with pieces, as the result of which the QBP becomes indefensible.

21 ... Kt–K5
22 K–R1 R–R3
23 Q–B1

Position after White's 23rd move



Let us imagine for the moment that Black's KR is at his QKt3. Then Black would win at once with 23 ..., P–B3; 24 Kt–B3, Q–R6; 25 R–QB2 (25 Q×Q, R×Q; 26 R–QB1, R(Kt)–Kt6), Kt×P. So it is clear that Black should transfer the KR to QKt3. This could be achieved most exactly by 23 ..., P–R4 and then R–R3–QKt3. The text continuation is also adequate.

23 ... R–Q1
24 R–QB2 R(Q1)–Q3
25 Kt–Kt4

An "heroic" attempt to exchange off the Black Knight. Defeat also follows 25 Kt–B3, R–KKt3; 26 R–K1, R–QR6; 27 R(K)–K2, R(Kt)–R3 (28 Kt–Q2, Kt×P); and the Queen's transfer to R4 decides the issue.

25 ... R–KKt3
26 P–KR3 P–R4
27 Kt–K5

Tantamount to capitulation!

27 ... R(Kt3)–QKt3
28 Kt–B3 Q–R6!

See note to White's 23rd move.

29 Kt–Kt5

If 29 Kt–K5, Kt×P; 30 Q×Q, R×Q; 31 Kt–Q7 ch, K–B2; 32 Kt×R, Kt×R; 33 Kt×P ch, K–Q3; 34 P–K4, Kt–K6!; 35 Kt×Kt, R×Kt; 36 R×BP, R×KP, and the endgame is completely hopeless for White.

29 ... Kt×P
30 Q×Q R×Q
31 R(1)–QB1 Kt–Kt4
32 Kt×P R×P
33 Kt–K5 K–B2
34 P–Kt4 Kt×P
35 R–Q2 Kt–K7
36 R–K1 Kt–B6
37 R–QB1

White resigned without waiting for Black's reply.

WIRELESS MATCH: U.S.S.R. *v.* U.S.A.

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No. 93. *Queen's Gambit Declined*

Denker (White)	*Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 Kt–QB3	P–QB3
4 Kt–B3	Kt–KB3

5 B–Kt5

This leads to complex and but little investigated play. 5 P–K3 is quieter.

5 ... P×P
6 P–K4 P–Kt4
7 P–K5 P–KR3
8 B–R4 P–Kt4

9 Kt×KKtP P×Kt

Alatortsev's System, 9 ..., Kt–Q4 (Lilienthal–Alatortsev, in the training tournament, Moscow–Leningrad 1939) has not kept its place in tournament practice since the Belavenietz–Ragozin game (Leningrad, 1939) in which Belavenietz continued 10 Kt×BP, Q×B; 11 Kt×R.

10 B×P QKt–Q2

In the game Van Scheltinga–Grünfeld, played in Holland, 1940, there was 10 ..., B–K2, which leads to less complicated play.

11 P×Kt

Questionable. So Zhivtsov played against me in the Moscow Championship, 1943. In a Szabó–Euwe game, at Hastings in 1940/41, 11 Q–B3 was played, and Euwe regards this as a very strong continuation. In my view Lilienthal's innovation, 11 P–KKt3! (Lilienthal–Botvinnik, and Mikenas–Botvinnik, Moscow, 1944), sets Black the most difficult tasks.

11 ... B–QKt2
12 B–K2 Q–Kt3
13 O–O

In his game against me Zhivtsov Castled long, but then Black managed to develop a strong attack on the King. Evidently Denker thought his King would be safer on the K side; however, the open KKt and KR files also provide Black with good prospects for an attack.

13 ... O–O–O
14 P–QR4

Shrewd, but, evidently, insufficient to overcome the difficulties that have arisen. White tries to open up play on the Q side, and in passing "invites" Black to win the Queen. After 14 ..., Kt–K4; 15 P×Kt!, R×Q; 16 QR×R, White's position is in all probability to be preferred, because of the threat Kt–K4–Q6 ch.

14 ... P–Kt5!

From this point Black seizes the initiative and holds on to it. As 15 Kt–R2 or 15 Kt–Kt1 would be too passive, White is forced to play 15 Kt–K4, providing Black with an important tempo for bringing the Bishop at Kt2 into action.

15 Kt–K4 P–B4
16 Q–Kt1!

Not an obvious move. Many masters would automatically play 16 Q–B2, to which Black, however, would reply 16 ..., P–B6!!; 17 KtP×P (there is no other defence against P×QP; if, for instance, 17 QP×P, then 17 ..., Kt×P; 18 Kt×Kt, B×Kt, followed by 19 ..., Q–B2, and the mate is unavoidable!), Q–B2!; 18 Kt–Kt3, BP×P; 19 P–QB4, Kt–B4, and Black would get a completely won game.

16 ... Q–B2

If White protects himself from the mate by 17 P–KKt3 or 17 P–R4 then 17 ..., B–KR3 would lead to the exchange of the Bishop at Kt5 and an irresistible attack along the KR file. The text reply, as is evident from the course of the game, forcedly leads to material losses.

17 Kt–Kt3 P×P

In order to draw off the Bishop from command of KB3.

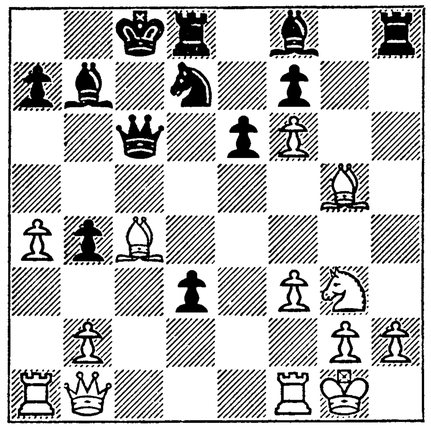
18 B×P Q–B3

Forcing the opening of Black's QR2–KKt8 diagonal, which in conjunction with the open KR file is of decisive importance.

19 P–B3 P–Q6!!

A threat of 20 ..., B–B4 ch; 21 K–R1; R×P ch; 22 K×R, R–R1 ch; and also the simple 20 ..., Q–B4 ch, capturing the Queen's Bishop. After 20 B–K3, B–B4; 21 B×B (21 Q–B1, P–Q7; 22 Q×P, Kt–K4), Q×B ch; 22 K–R1, R×P

Position after Black's 19th move



ch; or 20 Kt–K4, Q–B2; 21 P–KKt3, B×Kt; 22 P×B, Q–B4 ch, Black's superiority is decisive.

20 Q–B1 B–B4 ch
21 K–R1 Q–Q3!

Only thus. If 21 ..., R×P ch; 22 K×R, R–R1 ch, White has a defence: 23 B–R6. Now this would be met by P–Q7! and White is defenceless.

22 Q–B4

Defeat follows 22 B–B4 also; e.g. 22 ..., R×P ch; 23 K×R, R–R1 ch; 24 Kt–R5, R×Kt ch; 25 K–Kt3, P–K4; 26 B–K3 (or 26 B–Kt5, P–K5 dis. ch; 27 K–Kt4, P–Q7!; 28 Q×P, Kt×P ch; 29 B×Kt, Q×Q; 30 K×R, Q×KtP and wins), P–K5 dis. ch; 27 P–B4 (if 27 K–B2, then 27 ..., P–Q7; 28 Q–B2, P×P), Q×BP(6); 28 K–B2, Q×P ch.

22 ... R×P ch
23 K×R R–R1 ch
24 Q–R4 R×Q ch
25 B×R Q–B5
Resigns

A short, but tense struggle!

No. 94. *Slav Defence*

Botvinnik (White)	*Denker* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 Kt–KB3	Kt–KB3
3 P–QB4	P–QB3
4 P×P	

The exchange variation of the Slav Defence guarantees White a minute but indubitable superiority, as in symmetrical half-open play the advantage of the move may tell.

4 ... P×P
5 Kt–B3 Kt–B3
6 B–B4 Q–R4

It is usual to play 6 ..., B–B4; Lasker preferred the modest, but reliable, continuation 6 ..., P–K3. With the text move Black tries to seize the initiative. In the position obtaining this was hardly a sound decision.

7 P–K3 Kt–K5
8 Q–Kt3 P–K3
9 B–Q3 B–Kt5
10 QR–B1

In one game of the Euwe–Keres match, 1940, the continuation was 10 B×Kt, P×B; 11 Kt–Q2, after which, at the cost of the KP Black had counter-play. 10 QR–B1 sets Black more difficult tasks.

10 ... Kt×Kt

Equal to admission that the attack on QB6 has not achieved its object. 10 ..., P–B3 with the potential threats P–KKt4 and P–K4 leads to more complicated play, though probably in this case also his good development guarantees White the better game.

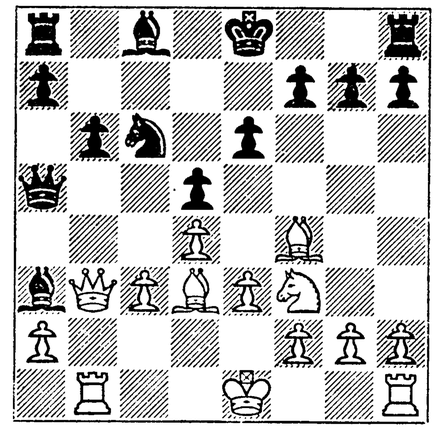
11 P×Kt B–R6

Black should have chosen to withdraw the Bishop to K2, as at R6 it will need continual protection.

12 QR–Kt1 P–QKt3

An alluring but erroneous plan. Black should still have played 12 ..., B–K2 followed by 13 ..., Q–Q1.

Position after Black's 12th move



Instead, he weakens his Q side and, in addition, cuts off the Queen's last line of retreat. Probably he hoped to play 13 ..., B–R3 with exchange of Bishops, but White easily parries this.

13 P–K4 P×P

Black now sees that 13 ..., B–R3 leads to loss of a pawn through 14 B×B, Q×B; 15 P×P, P×P; 16 Q×P, but he has not discerned White's basic idea. However it is doubtful whether he could defend himself successfully, owing to the exceptionally unfortunate position of his Queen.

14 B–Kt5!

An unexpected stroke. Black cannot avoid losses of material; his Queen is finally "stalemated," and the White manœuvre Kt–Q2–B4 acquires terrible force.

Naturally, after 14 B×P, B–Kt2, Black, with 15 ..., Kt×P would have a more or less satisfactory game.

14 ... B–Q2
15 Kt–Q2 P–QR3

Black's attempt to sacrifice his Queen is ingenious, but even this does not save the game.

16 B×Kt B×B
17 Kt–B4 Q–KB4
18 B–Q6

The simplest. It is doubtful whether 18 Q×B, Q×B; 19 R×KtP, B–Q4 is any stronger.

18 ... P–K6!

In this way Black prolongs the game for some ten moves. 18 ..., B–Q4; 19 B×B, P–QKt4 loses at once, because of 20 Kt–Q6 ch.

19 Kt×KP Q×R ch
20 Q×Q B×B
21 Q×P K–Q2

Hoping for the continuation 22 O–O, KR–QKt1; 23 Q–R5, R–Kt4.

22 Q–Kt3 QR–QKt1
23 Q–B2 R–Kt4
24 O–O R–KR4

Black's initiative is casual, for as soon as the White Rook comes into action Black will be in a hopeless situation.

25 P–KR3 R–QKt1
26 P–QB4 P–Kt3

Freeing the Rook from the necessity to defend the RP, but weakening the Black squares, which White immediately exploits.

27 Kt–Kt4 R–KB4
28 Kt–K5 ch

Exchanging off one of the Bishops and opening up the Q file facilitates White's task.

28 ... B×Kt
29 P×B R×KP

An oversight, which does not make any essential difference. The only reply is 29 ..., K–K1! Evidently Black reckoned only on 30 R–Q1 ch, K–K1; but White chooses a more exact order of moves.

30 Q–Q2 ch! Resigns

The Black King cannot retreat to the eighth rank, for then 31 Q–Q6 decides at once; and if 30 ..., K–K2 or 30 ..., K–B2; 31 R–Q1 follows, and there is no defence against 32 Q–Q6.

NINETEEN FORTY-SIX

THE first important international tournament of the post-war years was held in 1946, at Groningen in Holland; the U.S.S.R. was represented by five Soviet Grand Masters.

For two-thirds of the tournament I played well, and gathered 11½ points out of a possible thirteen. The critical game came in the tenth round, when I met M. Euwe (Game No. 98, *infra*). The two thousand Dutch chess-players watching the game, and all who participated in the tournament were confident that the end-game would go in Euwe's favour. But by "chance" I managed to draw, to the astonishment of the spectators, the other members of the tournament, and my opponent!

However, then I lost my grip, and in the last six rounds I collected only three points. Euwe himself was in no better case, for in the finish he collected only 2½ points out of five; I was half a point in front of him.

After losing two games in succession (in the 14th and 15th rounds) I was a whole point behind Euwe. At this jucture Smyslov gave me great moral support. As he and I were setting out to take part in the next round he expressed the view that I had simply got to win the tournament. When I told him I had already lost all hope, he warned me that if I didn't he would take first place himself, though at this stage he was two points behind the leading player. After such an optimistic declaration my spirits rose perceptibly, and I won three games in succession!

Whereas the wireless match with the U.S.A. had demonstrated the strength of the Soviet masters as a group, the Groningen tournament, in which Smyslov brilliantly carried off third prize, proved that the Soviet players had every right to win the world championship.

GRONINGEN INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT

August

No. 95. *Grünfeld Defence*

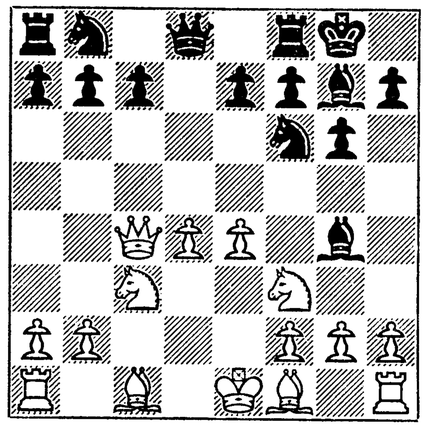
Botvinnik (White)	*Smyslov* (Black)
1 P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–KKt3
3 Kt–QB3	P–Q4
4 Kt–B3	B–Kt2
5 Q–Kt3	P×P

With this exchange Black relinquishes the centre to White; this signifies that Black has "something up his sleeve," and this "something" should open up clear prospects for counter-play. Smyslov did in fact have in mind a certain system of development which (in 1946!) proved inadequate to get Black equality. A year later he brilliantly succeeded in proving the soundness of his system.

6 Q×P	O–O
7 P–K4	B–Kt5

This is the key move of Smyslov's system. If White avoids the exchange at KB3 and plays 8 Kt–K5, 8 ..., B–K3 is possible, and 9 P–Q5 is doubtful as it leaves the Knight hanging. After the exchange at KB3 Black has solved the problem of developing his Queen's Bishop, and as soon as the Queen's Knight comes into play all his minor pieces will be developed. Moreover White's pawn centre proves by no means so powerful as it seems at first glance.

Position after Black's 7th move



8 B–K3	Kt–B3

Alas! In 1946 Smyslov had not yet found the subtle manœuvre 8 KKt–Q2! Now Black finds himself in a difficult situation.

9 P–Q5

White must play very carefully, as Black has already mobilized his forces. For instance, the continuation 9 P–KR3, B×Kt; 10 P×B, P–K4; 11 P–Q5, Kt–Q5! leads to Black being very active in the centre, so White must not lose any time.

9 ...	B×Kt!

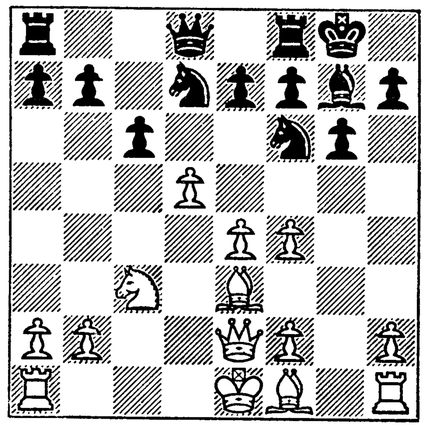
During the game I thought Smyslov was on an unsound road and that this exchange was not yet forced. I was rather afraid of the manœuvre 9 ..., Kt–QR4, with the continuation 10 Q–R4; P–B3; 11 P–K5, B×Kt; 12 P×Kt, B×BP; 13 P×B, P×P, and, despite White's extra piece, it would be difficult to say who had the better position, as White's pawn chain is shattered, while Black's two (extra) central pawns are unassailable. But in reality, after 9 ..., Kt–QR4; 10 Q–R4, P–B3; White has the energetic reply 11 R–Q1!! and Black is left with a bad game because of his Knight's unfortunate position at R4.

10 P×B

The subtlety of Black's idea is that to 10 P×Kt he replies 10 ..., P–QKt4!! and White is forced to part with his central KP; and then Black has fully equal play. However, White safely negotiates this "submarine reef," retaining positional superiority.

10 ...	Kt–K4
11 Q–K2	P–B3
12 P–KB4	Kt(K4)–Q2

Position after Black's 12th move



13 B–Kt2!

Now it is clear that Black's opening plan associated with 8 ..., Kt–QB3 was mistaken; 13 ..., P×P is followed by 14 P–K5!, Kt–K1; 15 B×P, and Black's QKtP is hopelessly weak. White, retaining the central QP, is able to complete the mobilization of his forces.

13 ...	Kt–Kt3
14 R–Q1	Q–B2

Still not 14 ..., P×P, because of 15 P–K5.

15 O–O	KR–Q1
16 R–B1	

A useful regrouping of the Rooks.

16 ...	Q–Q2
17 KR–Q1	Q–Kt5

A sound decision, as otherwise Black has no room for activity and must look on while White strengthens his position. The move leads through a series of exchanges to the endgame,

and though this is unfavourable to Black it is perhaps his only hope of salvation.

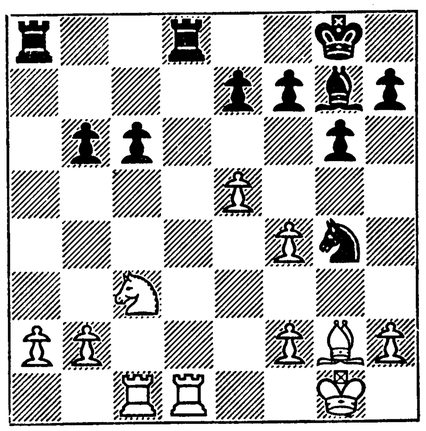
At this point, on calculating the exchange variation which follows in the text, I came to the conclusion that it leads to a won endgame with White a pawn up; I did not check this variation further, after each of Black's moves (an unforgivable negligence) but swiftly played the moves I had worked out.

18 Q×Q Kt×Q
19 B×Kt P×B
20 P×P

As the reader will see from the following note, this move surrenders much of White's advantage. The sound move is 20 P–K5 at once, and if 20 ..., P–QB4, then 21 P–QR4 (followed by 22 P–QKt3 and 23 Kt–Kt5), giving White to all intents and purposes an extra pawn with the better position.

20 ... P×P
21 P–K5

Position after White's 21st move



I had closely analysed this position at my 18th move, and had the impression that it is highly favourable to White, as (1) the Bishop at Kt2 is inactive (21 ..., B–R3; 22 P–KR3!); (2) Black must use two tempi to bring his Knight into play (Kt–R3–B4); and (3) Black's QBP cannot be defended, for 21 ..., QR–B1 is met by 22 B–R3 (..., P–R4; 23 P–B3) and Black loses it without improving the position of his pieces.

But now, while waiting for Smyslov to reply, to my chagrin I noticed that after 21 ..., QR–B1; 22 B–R3, P–R4; 23 P–B3, Black continues 23 ..., Kt–K6!! retaining material equality. So if White wants to capture the QBP he must go in for an exchange of Rooks; but after 21 ..., QR–QB1; 22 R×R ch, R×R; 23 B×P, Black is left with the Q file for counter-play. Evidently, if Black plays 21 ..., QR–B1 White must transpose to the rather better endgame: 22 B–R3, P–R4; 23 P–B3, Kt–K6; 24 B×R, Kt×R; 25 R×Kt, R×B; 26 R–Q7.

However, Smyslov was so demoralized by the speed with which I made the moves through all these exchanges that he did not bother to check his opponent's calculations, and reconciled himself to the loss of the QBP.

21 ... Kt–R3
22 B×P R×R ch
23 R×R R–QB1
24 Kt–Q5!

Of course White uses every device to maintain his Bishop at B6, as by doing so the Black Rook remains out of play.

24 ... B–B1
25 R–QB1 Kt–B4
26 R–QB4!

In an endgame with Bishops of opposite colours, and pawn weakness on both sides, it is not desirable to chase after great material superiority. E.g. 26 Kt×KtP, R–Kt1; 27 Kt–R4 (27 Kt–B4 is met by 27 ..., Kt–Q5! with a double attack, on the Bishop and on the Rook), R–Kt5; leads to increased activity of Black's pieces. In any case the

QKtP will not "run away," as 26 ..., R–Kt1; 27 P–QR4! is sufficiently hopeless for Black.

26 ... P–K3
27 Kt×P R–Kt1
28 Kt–R4 R–Q1

Smyslov exploits the very first opportunity for counter-play!

29 B–K4 Kt–R5
30 K–B1 B–R3!

White also has weaknesses, but apart from that he also has two linked passed pawns, which should decide the game.

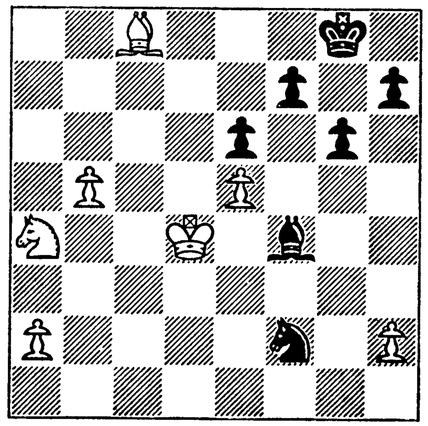
31 B–Kt7! Kt–B4
32 K–K2 Kt–Q5 ch
33 K–K3 Kt–B4 ch
34 K–B3 Kt–Q5 ch
35 K–K4 Kt–K7
36 R–B8 R×R
37 B×R Kt×P
38 P–Kt4

38 Kt–B5 is simpler, thus always having the possibility of transferring the Knight to Q3, to defend the K and KB pawns; Black is impotent to prevent the queening of the QRP. But now some small complications follow.

38 ... Kt–R6!
39 P–Kt5 Kt×P ch
40 K–Q4 B–B5

Here the game was adjourned. White had to seal his 41st move. The straightforward advance of his KtP makes a win difficult because of 41 P–Kt6, Kt–Kt5; 42 P–Kt7, B×P ch; and then 43 ..., B×RP. However, White can upset the co-operation of Black's pieces.

Position after Black's 40th move



41 P–KR3! P–B3

After 41 ..., Kt×P; 42 P–Kt6, and then, if necessary, 43 Kt–B5, one of White's two passed pawns reaches the eighth rank betimes. Smyslov tries to improve his King's position.

42 B×P ch K–Kt2
43 P×P ch K×P
44 Kt–B5 K–K2
45 K–Q5

Black is helpless, and further resistance is useless.

45 ... P–Kt4
46 P–QR4 Kt–Q8
47 P–R5 Kt–B6 ch
48 K–B6 Kt×P
49 K×Kt B–Kt1
50 K–Kt6 Resigns

No. 96. *Dutch Defence*

Steiner (White)	*Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–K3
2 P–QB4	P–KB4
3 P–KKt3	Kt–KB3
4 B–Kt2	B–Kt5 ch

This check is useful only if White does not play 5 B–Q2. If 5 B–Q2, Black's best policy is to withdraw the Bishop, losing a tempo, which in the given position is not so important.

5 B–Q2 B–K2
6 Kt–KB3

The system associated with the

development of the Knight to KR3 is worth consideration.

6 ... P–Q4
7 Kt–B3 P–B3
8 O–O O–O
9 B–B4

Perhaps the Bishop stands best at KB4, but now Black is compensated for the loss of tempo at the 5th move.

9 ... Q–K1
10 Q–B2

An elastic move; now White need not trouble about the QBP, as if P×P he plays P–K4 with advantage.

10 ... Q–R4
11 QR–K1

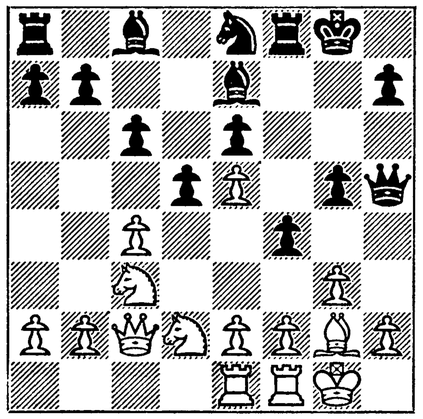
Steiner is aiming to break through in the centre with P–K4, not a new, but neither is it a very successful plan in this position.

11 ... QKt–Q2
12 Kt–Q2

Consistent, but not good! White plans to continue P–KB3 followed by P–K4, but this move, which weakens his control over the central K5 square, hands the initiative to Black and leads to a difficult position for White.

12 ... P–KKt4
13 B–B7 Kt–K1
14 B–K5 Kt×B
15 P×Kt P–B5!

Position after Black's 15th move



It is necessary to prevent P–B4. To 16 P–K4 Black replies 16 ..., P–KB6, and his superiority would be obvious. It is difficult to say at this juncture that White's game is lost, but after his next, imprudent move, opening the KKt file and weakening the pawn at K5 still further, Black has every chance of victory.

One must remark that all this system for Black (P–KKt4, the exchange of minor pieces at K4, followed by P–KB5) is not new. So far as I remember, in a Levenfish–Model game (Leningrad, 1930) Model successfully applied it in an analogous position. One has only to add that Levenfish did not exchange at KB4 (which leads to the opening up of the KKt file); he played P–K4, and allowed P–KB6.

16 KtP×P KtP×P

For White the first unpleasant consequence of the exchange at KB4 is the weak P at K5. The second consequence, which will have its effect only some moves later, is Black's attack along the KKt file, which at the moment seems problematic, but which will be fatal to White!

17 Kt–B3 K–R1

A useful move. White cannot now advance the KP from K3, as after 18 P–K3, R–KKt1; 19 K–R1 (otherwise, 19 ..., Q–R6) R×B he loses at once.

18 K–R1 Kt–Kt2

Both now and later 19 P–K4, P×P e.p. leads to a lost position for White. E.g. 20 P×KP, Kt–B4; 21 Q–B2, R–KKt1; 22 Kt–K2, Q–R3. As White has no other active plan he is forced simply to look on as Black brings up forces for the decisive blow.

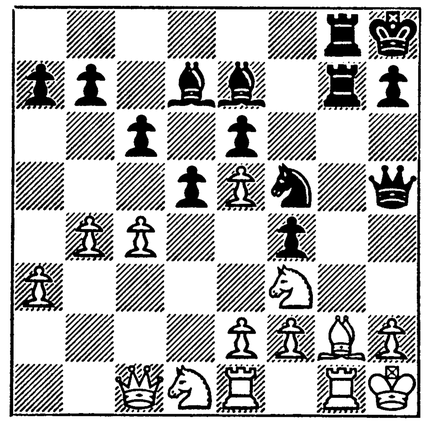
19 Q–B1 B–Q2

20 P–QR3 R–B2
21 P–Kt4 R–KKt1
22 R–KKt1 Kt–B4
23 Kt–Q1

23 Q×P is bad if only because of 23 ..., Kt–Kt6 ch.

23 ... R(B2)–Kt2!

Position after Black's 23rd move



It is only seven moves since the KKt file was opened, but Black has already mobilized all his forces except the Queen's Bishop for the attack, and in any case this will not be required. White has practically no move, even 24 B–B1 is impossible because of 24 ..., Q×Kt ch. "In his misery" White decides to take the KBP, which psychologically is quite understandable: it may be possible to repulse the attack; and besides, this pawn has continually cramped White's game, and under its cover Black has prepared a decisive blow. However, taking the pawn leads forcedly to defeat.

24 Q×P R–Kt5
25 Q–Q2 Kt–R5

Exchanging off White's chief defensive piece, the Knight at B3. Now the Bishop is under threat: 26 Kt×Kt is out of the question because of 26 ..., R×Kt with inevitable mate. White has one sole defence.

26 Kt–K3 Kt×Kt
27 P×Kt

Also forced; 27 B×Kt, Q×RP ch! leads to mate.

27 ... R–R5
28 Kt–B1 B–Kt4

Steiner resigned, as after the Queen's retreat Black plays 29 ..., B–B5, and there is no escaping the mate.

No. 97. *Catalan System*

Botvinnik (White) — *Vidmar* (Black)

1 P–Q4 P–Q4
2 Kt–KB3 Kt–KB3
3 P–QB4 P–K3
4 P–KKt3 P×P
5 Q–R4 ch Q–Q2

A well-known variation of the Catalan System, in which Black tries to simplify play by exchanging Queens.

6 Q×BP Q–B3

Forcing the Queen exchange, as the Queen's Bishop is undefended.

7 QKt–Q2 Q×Q
8 Kt×Q B–Kt5 ch

Black does not want to let slip the possibility of exchanging Bishops too, but he does not notice that he will get into a difficult situation, for White retains the strong central QP. 8 ..., P–QB4 is the only move.

9 B–Q2 B×B ch
10 KKt×B!

A sound decision. The Knight is transferred to the Queen side, and the great diagonal opens for the Bishop.

10 ... Kt–B3
11 P–K3 Kt–QKt5

This seems very strong, as at first glance no satisfactory defence

appears against 12 ..., Kt–B7 ch. However, White has a simple way of retaining the initiative.

12 K–K2 B–Q2
13 B–Kt2 B–B3
14 P–B3

After all Black has gained some success. He has developed his minor pieces and compelled White to close the diagonal to the Bishop. But his pieces are cramped in their operations, and P–B3 aids the formation of a pawn centre and the centralization of the White King.

14 ... Kt–Q2
15 P–QR3 Kt–Q4
16 P–K4 Kt–Kt3
17 Kt–R5 B–Kt4 ch
18 K–K3 O–O–O

Well played. Black realizes that White's main blow will be directed against the Q side along the half open QB file, and the King is required on that side for defence. Black's immediate anxiety is to relieve himself of the unpleasant Knight at R5 by the manœuvre Kt–Kt1–B3.

19 KR–QB1 Kt–Kt1
20 P–QKt3 B–Q2

Vidmar is playing thoughtfully. If he played immediately 20 ..., Kt–B3; 21 P–R4!, Kt×Kt; 22 P×B, and Black would lose a piece.

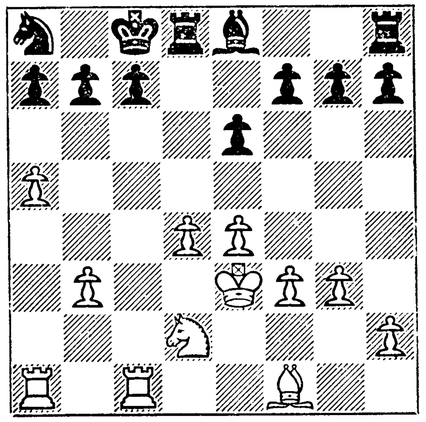
21 B–B1 Kt–B3
22 Kt×Kt B×Kt
23 P–QR4 B–K1

The Black Bishop's manœuvres are interesting. This last move is necessary now, in order to prevent P–QR5–R6×KtP, after which the QR file also would be opened and the disunited pawns of the Q side would become a target for attack.

24 P–R5 Kt–R1!

Black is again equal to the situation! If 24 ..., Kt–Q2, then 25 P–R6, P–Kt3; 26 R–B3, K–Kt1; 27 QR–B1, R–QB1; 28 Kt–B4, R–Q1 (otherwise 29 Kt–Q6); 29 Kt–R3, R–QB1; 30 Kt–Kt5, and Black loses.

Position after Black's 24th move



25 P–R6 P–QKt3
26 P–QKt4 K–Kt1

After the immediate 26 ..., P–QB3; 27 B–Kt5, K–B2; 28 R–B3 is possible. Now White's best continuation is 27 P–Kt5, and that he does not do so is perhaps the one criticism that can be made of his play in this game.

27 R–B3 P–QB3
28 QR–B1 P–KB3!

Forestalling the manœuvre Kt–QB4–K5. Bad would be 28 ..., Kt–B2; 29 P–Kt5, Kt×P; 30 B×Kt, P×B; 31 R–B7! and White doubles his Rooks on the seventh rank.

Now it seems as though White's initiative has come to an end, Black has succeeded in putting up a defence. Black even offered a draw, but White managed to find an interesting way of renewing the attack.

29 Kt–Kt1!

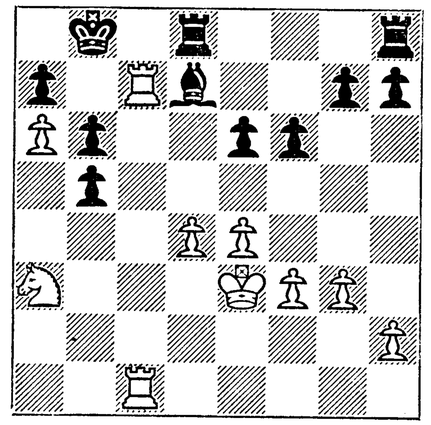
29 Kt–B4 is also possible, and after 29 ..., Kt–B2; 30 Kt–R3, B–Q2 (30 ..., P–QKt4; 31 R–QR1! and then Kt–Kt1–Q2–Kt3) this leads to the same position as in the text.

29 ... B–Q2
30 Kt–R3

What is Black to do? There is a threat of 31 P–Kt5, P×P; 32 B×P, B×B; 33 Kt×B, and Black is helpless because of the weakness of the RP. If he plays 30 ..., P–Kt4, there follows 31 Kt–Kt1, Kt–B2; 32 R–R3, then Kt–Q2–Kt3–B5, and Black's position is lost. If, finally, 30 ..., R–B1, to prevent 31 P–Kt5, then 31 Kt–B4, and White breaks into Q6 and obtains clear superiority. So Black is forced to play the Knight to B2, enabling White to organize a break-through along the QB file.

30 ... Kt–B2
31 P–Kt5! Kt×P
32 B×Kt P×B
33 R–B7

Position after White's 33rd move



Black's situation is critical. He loses by 33 ..., P–Kt5; 34 R–Kt7 ch, K–R1; 35 R(B1)–B7!, B–B1; (after other replies White mates in three moves); 36 R×P ch, K–Kt1; 37 Kt–Kt5, and mate in three moves again threatens; just as bad is 33 ..., K–R1; 34 R–Kt7, B–B1; 35 R×B ch!, R×R; 36 Kt×P. The sound course consists in the continuation: 33 ..., B–B1, and to 34 Kt×P not 34 ..., B×P, because of 35 Kt×P, B–Kt2; 36 Kt–Kt5, R–B1 (36 ..., B–R3; 37 R(7)–B6!); 37 K–Q2!, R×R (37 ..., B–R3; 38 R(1)–B6!); 38 Kt×R, B–B1; 39 P–Q5, P×P (the variation 39 ..., R–Q1; 40 R–B6, P×P; 41 Kt×P, K–R2; 42 R–B7 ch, B–Kt2; 43 R×P, gives White an extra pawn); 40 Kt×P, P–QKt4; 41 R–B5, B–Q2; 42 K–B3, and White has a good basis for winning the endgame; but 33 ..., B–B1; 34 Kt×P, R–Q2!!; 35 R×R, B×R; 36 Kt×P, K×Kt; 37 R–B7 ch, K×P; 38 R×B, R–QB1 and Black in all probability can achieve a draw.

Black's text reply enables White, by sacrificing the exchange, to achieve a rare, though not easily exploited, won position.

33 ... R–QB1
34 R–Kt7 ch K–R1
35 R×B!! R×R
36 Kt×P R(R1)–QB1

There is no other defence against 37 R×P ch, K–Kt1; 38 R–Kt7 ch, K–R1 (38 ..., K–B1; 39 Kt–R7 ch, and 40 R–Kt8 ch); 39 Kt–B7 ch. As the result both Black's Rooks are forced to keep guard along the QB file.

37 R×P P–R3
38 R×P ch K–Kt1
39 R–Kt7 ch K–R1
40 R–R7 ch K–Kt1
41 R–Kt7 ch K–R1
42 P–Kt4

With the intention of winning by way of P–KR4–R5, and acquiring passed pawns on the K side. So Black makes a desperate attempt to get rid of the unpleasant Knight.

42 ... P–K4
43 P–Q5 R(8)–B4
44 R–R7 ch K–Kt1
45 R–Kt7 ch K–R1
46 R×P R–QKt1

The only move; otherwise 47 R–Kt7, and Black is again helpless.

47 R×R ch K×R
48 P–R7 ch K–Kt2!

The best reply. The continuation 48 ..., K–R1; 49 P–Q6, R–B1; 50 K–Q3! (50 Kt–B7 ch, K×P; 51 Kt–K6, R–B6 ch! lets the win slip), K–Kt2 (50 ..., R–B8; 51 Kt–B3); 51 Kt–B7, K×P; 52 K–B4 is still worse. But now White cannot win by the immediate 49 P–Q6, R–B1; 50 K–Q3, R–B8; 51 Kt–B3, R–QR8!

49 Kt–Q6 ch	K×P
50 Kt–K8	K–Kt3
51 Kt×P	R–B6 ch
52 K–B2	R–B2
53 P–R4	R–B2
54 Kt–R5	K–B2
55 P–Kt5!	P×P
56 P×P	R–R2
57 Kt–B6	R–R7 ch
58 K–Kt3	R–R8
59 K–Kt2	R–R1
60 P–Kt6	Resigns.

60 ..., R–R3; 61 P–Kt7, R–Kt3 ch; 62 K–B2, R×P, is followed by 63 Kt–K8 ch.

During the first half of the Groningen tournament I played more than one good game, but probably the foregoing was the best of all. The value of this difficult, though perhaps not entirely faultless game was greatly increased by Black's ingenious defence. He can be criticized only for inexact play at the eighth move in the opening, and for his blunder at the 33rd move in a difficult position, where it was not easy to find the hidden road to the draw.

No. 98. *Queen's Gambit Accepted*

Botvinnik (White)	*Euwe* (Black)
1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 Kt–KB3	Kt–KB3
3 P–QB4	P×P
4 P–K3	P–K3
5 B×P	P–B4
6 O–O	P–QR3
7 P–QR4	

This old continuation, favoured by Rubinstein, is now out of fashion, as it has been proved that in allowing ..., P–QKt4 White retains the opening advantage without weakening his QKt4. But 7 P–QR4 also leads to difficult play for Black.

7 ...	Kt–B3
8 Q–K2	B–K2

A good system of defence adopted in the Semmering–Baden tournament, 1937. Previously it had been customary for Black to exchange in the centre: 8 ..., P×P; 9 R–Q1, but in that case White has no difficulty in developing his Queen's Bishop.

If 9 P×P Black intends to reply: 9 ..., Kt–K5!

9 R–Q1	Q–B2
10 Kt–B3	

In one of my games against Keres, at Leningrad in 1941, I continued 10 P–KR3, which at this stage is not obligatory.

10 ...	O–O
11 P–QKt3	

Here a doubtful continuation is 11 P×P, B×P; 12 P–R3 (12 P–K4, Kt–Kt5!), Kt–K4; 13 Kt×Kt, Q×Kt. If White prepares the exchange at QB5 with 11 P–R3, Black can continue 11 ..., R–Q1, and again White does not achieve anything.

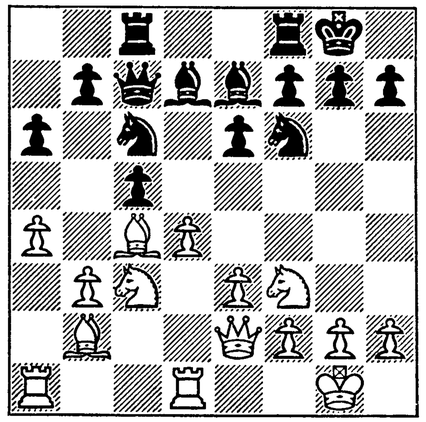
11 ...	B–Q2
12 B–Kt2	QR–B1

A routine move, which leads to a difficult position for Black. To prevent 13 P–Q5 he should have decided on the sharp continuation 12 ..., P×P; 13 P×P, Kt–QR4;

14 Kt–K5, and he would have had serious counter-play on the Q side.

Now the QB file remains closed, and White's superiority in the centre becomes very important.

Position after Black's 12th move



13 P–Q5!	P×P
14 Kt×P	Kt×Kt
15 B×Kt	B–Kt5

Essentially the only move, as 15 ..., Kt–Kt5; 16 B–K5! is unsatisfactory for Black. It is now clear that because of Black's 12th move White has the better of the middle-game. Black has been unable to consolidate his position in the centre, and White's Bishops are very dangerous.

16 Q–B4

During the game I had the impression that it would have been stronger to play 16 P–R3, B–R4; 17 P–Kt4, B–Kt3; 18 P–R4, P–R3 (18 ..., P–R4; 19 Kt–Kt5), but it must be admitted that the text move is also not bad.

16 ...	B–R4
17 B×Kt	

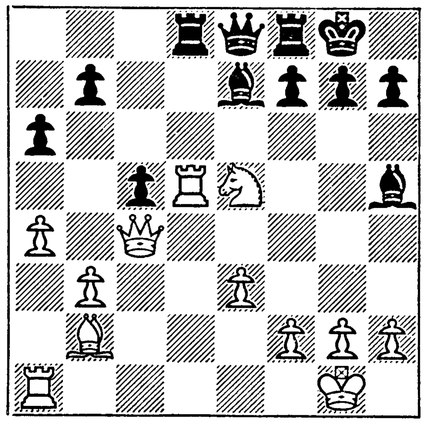
Quite logical, for the variation 17 P–KKt4, B–Kt3 (doubtful: 17 ..., Kt–R4; 18 Q–KB1!, B–Kt3; 19 QR–B1); 18 P–R4, P–R4 gives Black some counter-play. White surrenders one of his Bishops, but gains still more in space.

17 ...	Q×B
18 Kt–K5	Q–K1!

Euwe is defending himself with great ingenuity. 19 P–KKt4 is met by 19 ..., B–B3; 20 R–Q5, P–QKt4 (or 20 ..., B–Kt3; 21 R×P, R×R; 22 Q×R, B×Kt; 23 Q×B, Q×Q; 24 B×Q, P–B3) and all is well with Black.

19 R–Q5	R–Q1

Position after Black's 19th move



Played with excessive caution, and, as often happens in such cases, Black's position deteriorates as the result. Meanwhile, if he had continued 19 ..., P–QKt4! (the White Queen must be driven from her excellent position) he would have had a fully equal game; for instance:

(1) 20 Q–B2, R–Q1; 21 R×R, Q×R.

(2) 20 Q–B4, R–Q1 (20 ..., P–R3 is also playable); 21 R×[illegible]

(3) 20 Q–B3, P–B3; 21 Kt–Q7, Q–B2!; 22 P–K4, KR–Q1.

After the text move, White would have rich play with 20 P–Kt4, B–Kt3 (20 ..., P–QKt4 is now too late; 21 R×R!); 21 QR–Q1, R×R; 22 Q×R, Q–B1; 23 Kt–Q7 (23 ..., R–Q1; 24 B×P!, B–B7; 25 B–B3, B×R; 26 Q–K5, P–B3; 27 Q–K6 ch). Instead of which, White decides to "play for a mate"; but he lacks "only" one tempo. The initiative

passes to Black, and Euwe begins to play with great energy.

20 Kt–Q7 R×Kt
21 R×B Q–Q1!

If White's QR were at KB1, White would win at once with 22 B×P, K×B; 23 Q–Kt4 ch, K–R1; 24 Q–B5. Alas, his Rook is at QR1, and in this variation he would himself be mated, so he is forced to lose a highly important tempo!

22 R–KB1 P–KKt3!

Very good: White's Rook is shut out of play.

23 R–R3 R–Q8

White's pieces have lost their interaction, and Euwe plays for simplification. It must not be forgotten that Black's three pawns to two on the Q side give him tangible superiority in the endgame.

24 P–KKt4 R×R ch
25 K×R P–QKt4!

Black makes use of a favourable moment to advance the pawn, and White cannot take twice because of the Black Queen's possible check.

26 P×P P×P
27 Q–B4 P–B3

Ensuring the King's safety. Now White has to defend the QKtP.

28 P–K4 Q–Q8 ch
29 K–Kt2 B–Q3

Euwe is deliberately playing for the endgame. Black can hardly achieve more; for instance, if 29 ..., Q–B7; 30 B–B1, R–B2 (otherwise 31 R×P); 31 R–B3, White maintains the balance of power.

30 Q–B3 Q×Q ch
31 R×Q B–K4
32 B×B P×B
33 R–B3

Of course, after 33 R×R ch, K×R; 34 K–B3, P–Kt4, Black wins by transferring his King to QR4. Here White perhaps could play more strongly, i.e. 33 R–Q3, R–B1; 34 R–Q5, P–B5; 35 P×P, P×P; 36 K–B1, K–B2! (36 ..., P–B6; 37 R–Q1! leads to a draw, as the QBP is lost); 37 K–K2, K–K3; 38 R–R5, and a draw is quite likely.

33 ... R–B1
34 K–B3 K–B2
35 K–K3 K–K3
36 P–B4

This part of the game was spoilt a little by a time-scramble: on the other hand, without it this game would not have had its valuable finish! White's last move is weak, as Black gets the central K4 square for his King. It is possible that this move does not really lose, but the simple 36 K–Q2 suggested itself, and Black, despite his advantage, could hardly force the win.

36 ... P×P ch
37 K×P P–B5
38 P×P

Otherwise 38 ..., P–Kt5 follows.

38 ... P×P
39 P–R4 P–R3

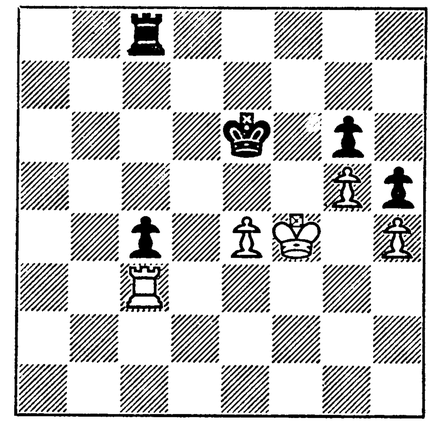
It may seem strange that this natural move should give White new chances of salvation. After the game Flohr suggested 39 ..., R–B4 as the strongest. But Euwe found a serious objection, namely: 39 ..., R–B4; 40 P–K5!, K–Q4; 41 R–K3!, R–B3 (41 ..., P–B6; 42 P–K6, P–B7; 43 P–K7, R–B1; 44 R–K1, K–Q3; 45 K–Kt5, K–Q2; 46 R–QB1, K×P; 47 K–R6); 42 P–R5, and White still has hopes of avoiding defeat.

40 P–Kt5! P–R4

White had to seal his move at this critical point. I regarded the game as lost, as I knew that Rubinstein had lost to Lasker, at Petersburg in 1914, in an analogous position. But

when during the adjournment I set up the pieces for the purpose of analysis, I at once saw a hidden possibility of a draw. The game was resumed after a break of an hour and a half.

Position after Black's 40th move



41 K–K3 K–K4
42 R–B2!!

The only move.

42 ... P–B6
43 K–Q3 R–Q1 ch

Here my opponent was lost in thought; he saw that the game should end in a draw. In the Lasker–Rubinstein game there were no RPs (the position was identical, except that the colours were changed) and Lasker won by 43 ..., R–B2; 44 K–K3, R–R2; followed by R–R6 ch, and R–KKt6. Rubinstein could not escape this continuation, since the pawn ending was a lost one for him.

But in my game 43 ..., R–B2 led to a different situation, namely: 43 ..., R–B2; 44 R×P, R×R ch; 45 K×R, K×P; 46 K–B4, K–B5; 47 K–Q4, K–Kt5; 48 K–K5, K×P; 49 K–B6, K–Kt5; 50 K×P, P–R5; 51 K–B6, P–R6; 52 P–Kt6, P–R7; 53 P–Kt7, P–R8(Q); 54 P–Kt8(Q) ch, and draws!

44 K–K3!

After 44 K×P Black retains the possibility of playing for a win, as the White King is cut off from the pawns.

44 ... R–Q5
45 R×P R×P ch
46 K–B3 R×P
47 R–B6!

The last finesse. The variation 47 R–B5 ch, K–Q3; 48 R–R5, R–QB5 also perhaps leads to a draw, but White would have more than one difficult problem to solve.

47 ... R–B5 ch

Black cannot defend the KtP; e.g. 47 ..., K–B4; 48 R–B5 ch, K–K3; 49 R–B6 ch, and White either gives perpetual check, or he attacks the KtP.

48 K–K3 R–K5 ch
49 K–B3 K–B4
50 R–B6 ch K×P
51 R×P ch

Drawn.

A fighting game! Without doubt its ending will be given in all future textbooks on the endgame.

No. 99. *French Defence*

Stoltz (White)	*Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K3
2 Q–K2	

Master Stoltz avoids the usual variations, and adopts the move of the great Russian player, Tchigorin. However, as play proceeds it transpires that Stoltz does not know all the finesses of Tchigorin's opening idea.

2 ... P–QB4
3 P–KKt3

Here 3 P–QKt3 is better, to hinder

the development of the Black Bishop to QKt2.

3 ... Kt–QB3
4 B–Kt2 KKt–K2
5 Kt–QB3 P–KKt3
6 P–Q3 B–Kt2
7 B–K3

This plays into Black's hands, and he provokes the exchange of the central KP and then consolidates his QKt in the centre.

7 ... P–Q4!

P–Q5 threatens. 8 B×P would be met by 8 ..., Q–R4.

8 P×P Kt–Q5
9 Q–Q2

After 9 B×Kt, P×B; and 10 ..., Kt×P Black has easy play.

9 ... P×P
10 QKt–K2

The variation 10 ..., Kt×Kt; 11 Kt×Kt, B×P; 12 R–QKt1, B–Kt2; 13 B×BP is not dangerous for White.

10 ... P–KR3
11 Q–B1

White prepares both 12 P–QB3 and the exchange at Q4. The immediate exchange 11 Kt×Kt, would lead, after 11 ..., P×Kt; 12 B–B4, P–Kt4 to the loss of a piece. The same result follows 11 P–QB3, Kt×Kt; 12 Kt×Kt, P–Q5; 13 P×P, P×P; 14 B–B4, P–Kt4.

11 ... B–B4
12 P–QB3

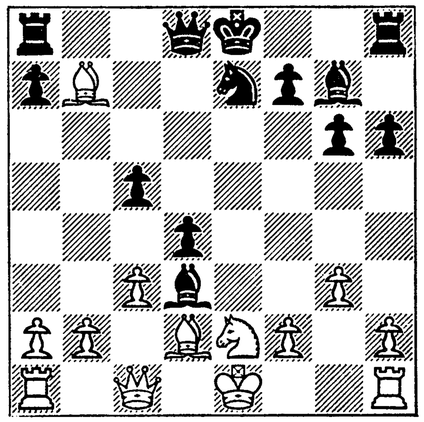
A losing move! White should have played 12 Kt×Kt, P×Kt; 13 B–Q2, R–QB1; 14 Q–Q1, and he still retains his strong position.

12 ... Kt×Kt
13 Kt×Kt P–Q5

Not, of course, 13 ..., B×QP because of 14 B×BP.

14 B–Q2 B×P
15 B×KtP

Position after White's 15th move



Evidently White was counting on 15 ..., R–QKt1; 16 B–B3, O–O; 17 O–O, and 18 R–K1 with a possible defence. However, a little surprise awaits him.

15 ... O–O!

It transpires that in the given situation the Bishop is much more important than the Rook. In sum Black wins a decisive tempo for attack.

16 B–B3 P–Kt4!

Depriving White's pieces of KB4 square and preparing the Knight's final manœuvre: Kt–Kt3–K4–Q6.

17 O–O Kt–Kt3
18 R–K1 Kt–K4
19 B–Kt2 B–R3
20 Q–Q1 Kt–Q6
21 Q–R4 Q–B3

White cannot avoid losses of material.

22 P–KB4 QR–K1
23 B–B6 Kt×R
24 B×R Kt–B6 ch
25 K–B2 Kt×B

And a few moves later White resigns.

No. 100. *French Defence*

Tartakower (White)	*Botvinnik* (Black)
1 P–K4	P–K3
2 P–Q4	P–Q4
3 P×P	P×P
4 Kt–KB3	

The plan of play Tartakower has chosen is interesting. In order to exclude any surprises in the opening, he has gone in for the exchange variation (usually this variation is chosen as a convenient base for a draw). But in this game he cleverly finds a way of complicating the struggle.

4 ... B–Q3
5 P–B4 Kt–KB3
6 P–B5

Hardly the strongest, as Black forces the exchange of this pawn.

6 ... B–K2
7 Kt–B3 P–QKt3
8 P×P RP×P
9 B–Q3 O–O
10 O–O B–KKt5

It is not easy for Black to find a sound plan. 10 ..., P–QB4 seems inviting, but it leads to a weakening of the QKt4 square, and after 11 B–KKt5!, B–K3; 12 Kt–K5 White has the initiative. White chooses a double-edged continuation.

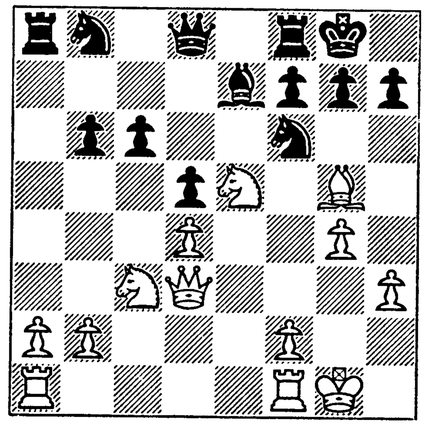
11 P–KR3 B–R4
12 P–KKt4 B–Kt3
13 Kt–K5 B×B
14 Q×B P–B3
15 B–Kt5

15 B–B4 is more cautious. Now there is a sharp struggle; but it must be remarked that, as the further course of the game shows, White did not foresee Black's reply.

15 ... Kt×P

An unexpected stroke, which Black

Position after White's 15th move



decided upon after twenty minutes' consideration. Black gets the clear advantage from 16 B×B, Kt×Kt; 17 B×Q, Kt×Q; 18 B×P, Kt×KtP, but difficult play for both sides comes out of 16 P×Kt, B×B. E.g. 17 K–Kt2 (17 P–B4, B–B3; 18 K–Kt2, B×Kt; 19 R–R1, P–B4), P–B3; 18 R–R1, B–R3; 19 Kt–Kt6, R–B2 (19 ..., P×Kt; 20 R×B!); 20 Kt–R4, B–Kt4; and despite Black's extra pawn the struggle has only just begun, as White has retained the initiative.

White mistakenly rejected the continuation indicated; he decided to preserve material equality, which hands the initiative to Black. And if the initiative passes to Black the weakness of White's K side begins to tell and his game proves to be lost.

16 Kt×QBP Kt×Kt
17 B×B Kt×B
18 P×Kt P–B4!

A great unpleasantness for White! He cannot take at KB5 because of 19 P×P, R×P (or Kt×P) and Black swiftly transfers his forces for an attack on the King. Nor is there any sound way of defending the KtP. Tartakower chooses the best course: he sacrifices the KtP, in order to gain time to double his Rooks on the K file.

19 QR–K1! P×P

20 R–K5 R–B6

An important move, shutting the White Queen out from defence of the King.

21 Q–Kt5 Kt–Kt3!

Fundamentally the game is decided, but . . . the time check plays its part. Naturally, 21 ..., Q–Q3; 22 R×Kt is inadequate, Black would have to take a draw by 22 ..., R–Kt6 ch. Now, after 22 Q×P ch, Q×Q; 23 R×Q, Kt–B5 and 24 ..., R–KB1 followed by 25 ..., P–Kt6 or 25 ..., Kt–R6 ch the endgame is hopeless for White. With his next move White gains equality of material, but he cannot hinder the development of Black's attack.

21 R×P Q–B3
22 R–Kt5

Tartakower is defending himself with extraordinary tenacity. If at once 23 R–R5, then 23 ..., R–Q1 (preventing check at Q5) and Black should consummate his attack without difficulty. Now the KKtP is threatened, and White has a tempo for checking with his Queen.

23 ... R–KB1
24 Kt–K4 Q–B5
25 Q–Q5 ch K–R1
26 R–R5

At first glance this move serves only as defence against mate (R–R6) but it is associated with a counter-threat (Kt–Kt5). So 26 ..., P–Kt6; 27 Kt–Kt5, P×P ch; 28 K–R1 is not dangerous for White. Now White was in severe time trouble while Black had fifteen minutes in hand. Black wins most simply by 26 ..., P–R3; 27 Q–K6, R–K6!; 28 Q×Kt, R×Kt, and there is no defence against 29 ..., R×QP or 29 ..., R–K7 (in conjunction with P–Kt6). In this variation I failed to find 27 ..., R–K6, and spent ten precious minutes on my next move, so I, too, found myself in time trouble and all but let the win slip out of my hands.

26 ... R–KR6
27 R×R P×R
28 Kt–Kt3

Defeat follows at once after 28 Kt–Kt5, Kt–K2!; 29 Q–K5, Q–Kt5 ch; 30 Q–Kt3, Q×Q ch; 31 P×Q, P–R7 ch.

28 ... Kt–R5
29 Q–K4 Kt–B6 ch
30 K–R1 Q×Q
31 Kt×Q R–B5
32 R–B1 P–R3

32 ..., P–Kt4; 33 R–B8 ch, K–Kt2; 34 R–B7 ch, K–B1 is simpler.

33 R–B3 P–KKt4

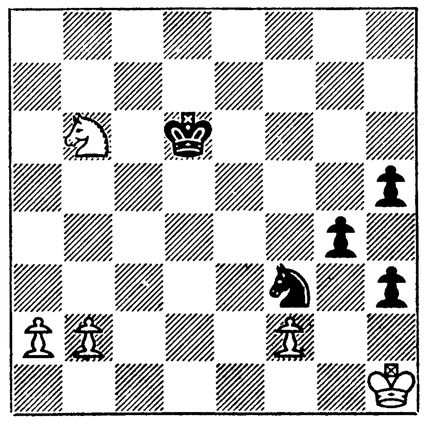
An inexact move caused by time trouble. The sound move is 33 ..., Kt×P, eliminating the important passed pawn with a gain of tempo, and then returning the Knight to B6.

34 R–K3 P–Kt5
35 P–Q5 K–Kt2
36 Kt–B3 R–B3
37 R–K6 K–B2

Probably 37 ..., R×R is stronger.

38 R×R ch K×R
39 P–Q6 K–K3
40 Kt–Q5 K×P
41 Kt×P P–R4!

Position after Black's 41st move



The sealed move. It is obviously the most logical. White's misfortune consists in the desperate position of his King, under the mortal threat of P–R5 followed by P–Kt6–Kt7 mate. Even in the difficult variation 42 P–R4!, Kt–Q7!! (pointed out by Bronstein); 43 P–R5, P–R5; 44 P–R6, P–Kt6; 45 P–R7, P–Kt7 ch; 46 K–R2, Kt–B6 ch; 47 K×P, P–Kt8(Q); 48 P–R8(Q), Q–R7 ch; 49 K–Kt4, Kt–K4 ch, with speedy mate, White could not save himself.

42 Kt–B4 ch K–Q4
43 Kt–K3 ch K–K5
44 P–R4

Shrewder is 44 P–Kt4, so that if 44 ..., K–Q6; 45 P–Kt5, K–K7; 46 P–Kt6, K×P; 47 Kt–B5, P–R5; 48 Kt×P, P–Kt6; 49 Kt×Kt, K×Kt; 50 P–Kt7, K–B7; 51 P–Kt8(Q), P–Kt7 ch; 52 K–R2, P–Kt8(Q) ch; 53 K×RP the Kt6 square is defended by the Queen, and the win is impossible. However, Black could continue 44 ..., Kt–Q5! and because of the threat K–B6×P, White's situation would remain hopeless.

44 ... K–Q6
45 Kt–Q5

Further advance of the RP is useless, as Black mates at KR6.

45 ... K–K7
46 Kt–B4 ch K×P
47 Kt×P ch

Taking the RP(4) leads step by step to mate: 47 Kt×P(4), P–Kt6; 48 Kt×P, K×Kt; 49 P–R5, P–R7; 50 P–R6, Kt–Kt4; 51 P–R7, Kt–K5; 52 P–R8(Q), Kt–B7 mate.

47 ... K–B8
48 Kt–B4 P–Kt6
49 Kt–Kt2 K–B7
50 P–R5 P–R5
51 Kt–B4 K–B8
52 Kt–Kt2 P–R6
53 Kt–K3 ch K–B7
54 Kt–Kt4 ch K–K7

White resigns, as the mate is unavoidable. A struggle that was not without mistakes, but was also full of interest!

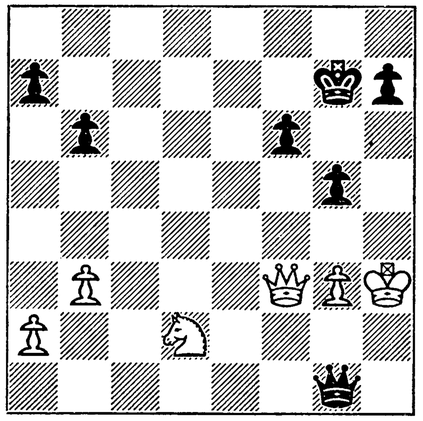
APPENDICES

SIX STUDIES

So far as the composition of studies is concerned my activities have been of a very modest nature. In more than twenty years I have six studies to my credit. In every case I have taken my themes from actual games.

The mating combination at the basis of the first study was one which I carried out in a friendly game with the Leningrad 1st category player, Liutov, in the winter of 1925. In the position shown on the diagram, Black has two extra pawns and a strong attack, as against White's extra Knight. The play went: 1 ..., P–KR4!; 2 Q×P (a loss follows both 2 P–KKt4, P×P ch; 3 Q×P, Q–R8 ch; 4 K–Kt3, Q–K8 ch; and 2 Q–Kt7 ch, K–R3, and there is no defence against 3 ..., P–Kt5 ch), Q–R8 ch; 3 K–Kt4, Q–Q8 ch; 4 Kt–B3, Q–Q2, mate! The end was so unexpected that for a moment my opponent did not notice that the game was over.

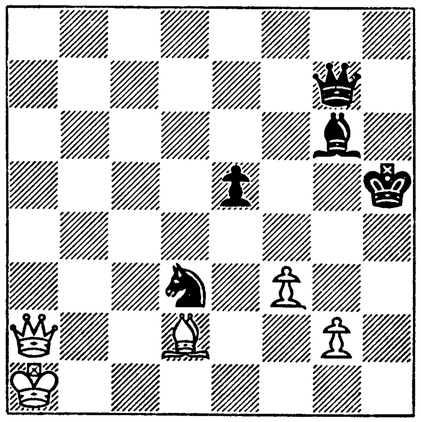
BOTVINNIK



LIUTOV
Black to play

Together with a composer of studies I worked over this combination, and gave it a more finished form.[1]

Study No. 1—1925



White to play and win

The solution is not difficult:

1 P–Kt4 ch	K–R5
2 B–R6!	Q×B
3 Q–R2 ch	K–Kt4
4 Q–Q2 ch	Kt–B5
5 Q–Q8 mate	

My second study was composed fourteen years later. While working on the book of the *U.S.S.R. Eleventh Championship* (1939) I analysed the endgame in a Levenfish–Kotov game. I had to spend a long time over one variation; the analysis resulted in the following pawn ending:[2]

[1] This study was published in *Shakhmatny Listok* (*Chess Sheet*), No. 11, June, 1925.
[2] *Shakhmati v S.S.S.R.* (*Chess in the U.S.S.R.*), No. 10, October, 1939.

The study seems simple enough, yet it is very difficult. White can easily capture the QP, but after 1 K–B5, K–Kt3; 2 K–K5, K–B3; 3 K–K6, K–B2!; 4 K×P, K–Q2; 5 K–B5, K–B2; Black saves the pawn at R3, the existence of which makes 6 K–Kt5 impossible. So White must capture both the RPs, for that is his only chance of winning. Even this is possible, again because of the existence of the pawn at R3. For instance, if the White King can get to QR8, because of the pawn at R3 Black cannot maintain the opposition and both the RPs will be lost.

So we shall try to get the King to R8.

1 K–B5!	K–Kt3
2 K–B6!	

White takes the opposition.

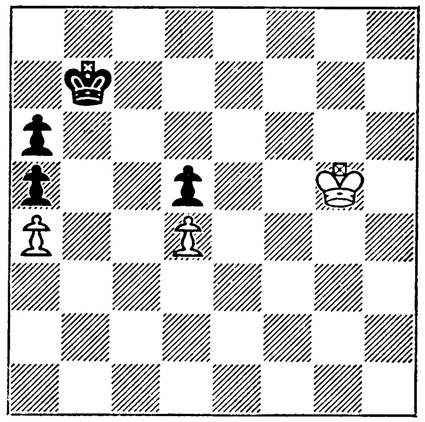
2 ...	K–Kt2
3 K–B7	K–Kt1

Or 3 ..., K–Kt3; 4 K–K8, K–B3; 5 K–Q8.

4 K–K6	K–B2
5 K–K7!	K–B3
6 K–Q8	K–Q3
7 K–B8	K–B3
8 K–Kt8	K–Kt3
9 K–R8!	

And White wins.

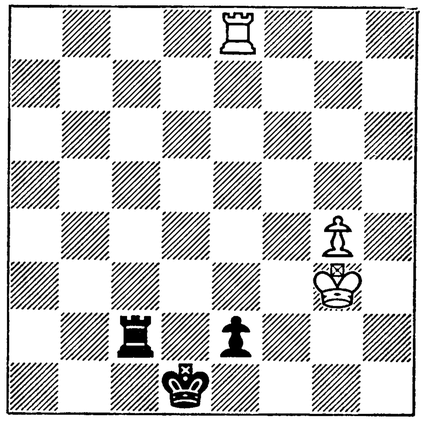
Study No. 2—1939



White to play and win

My next study was entered for the annual competition of *Shakhmati v S.S.S.R.* (*Chess in the U.S.S.R.*) 1939, and received the fourth prize.

The position opposite arose in a tournament game. After it was finished a win for Black was pointed out: 1 ..., R–B1; 2 R–K5, P–K8(Q) ch; 3 R×Q ch, K×R; 4 K–B4, R–Kt1; 5 P–Kt5, K–B7; 6 K–Kt4, K–Kt7, and White loses. E.g.: 7 K–B5, K–Kt6; 8 P–Kt6, K–R5; 9 K–B6, K–R4; 10 P–Kt7, K–R3. It was also pointed out that the variation 1 ..., P–K8(Q) ch; 2 R×Q ch, K×R; 3 K–B4 leads only to a draw.



Black to play

So it can be deduced that if the White Rook were not at K8, but, for instance, at K7, the game should end in a draw, as after 1 ...,R–B2; 2 R–K5, P–K8(Q) ch; 3 R×Q ch, K×R; 4 K–B4, R–Kt2; 5 P–Kt5, K–B7; 6 K–B5, K–Kt6; 7 P–Kt6, K–R5; 8 K–B6 White gains the decisive tempo.

None the less, White should lose irrespective of where his Rook is stationed in the first place.

The solution is quite ingenious:

1 ... P–K8(Q) ch!

2 R×Q ch K×R
3 K–B4 R–Kt7!!

The winning move. Here the Rook occupies the ideal position, and Black now has only to bring his King into action by the shortest route.

4 P–Kt5 K–B7
5 K–B5 K–Kt6!

This is the shortest route—first along the diagonal.

6 P–Kt6 K–R5
7 K–B6 K–R4

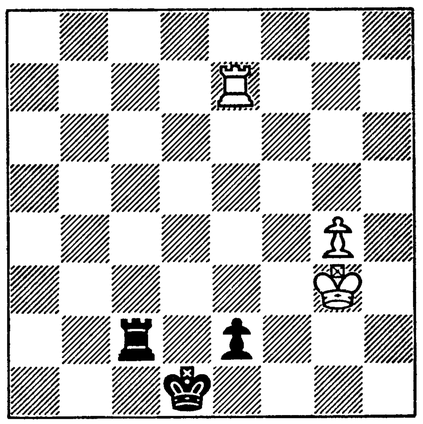
And now up the file.

8 P–Kt7 K–R3

And the White pawn is lost.

The Rook manœuvre to Kt7 and the King's subsequent manœuvre (K–B7–Kt6–R5) is not without beauty.

Study No. 3—1941



Black to play and win

I did not have to compose the fourth study.[1] It arose automatically during my analysis of the finish of a Boleslavsky–Bondarevsky game (Moscow, 1941).

This position could have arisen in the game I have mentioned. It did not because of a mistake on White's part. White threatens the Knight sacrifice at Kt7 (Kt–B5 and Kt×P) followed by P–R4–5–6 and P–Kt6–7–8(Q). Black has only one defence:

1 ... B–Q7

Now P–Kt6 ch is premature because of 2 ..., K–B3. It is impossible to win without the aid of the RP. So at first White must confine himself to defence.

2 Kt–B3 B–B5

We shall consider the other possibility: 2 ..., B–B6, later.

3 P–R4 B–Kt6

Of course, 3 ..., P–Kt3 loses at once because of 4 P–R5.

4 P–R5 B–B5

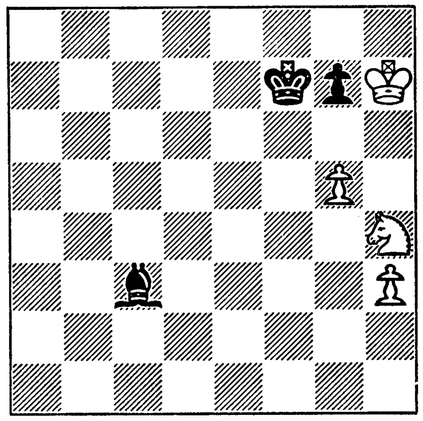
White would seem to be at a dead end. To 5 P–R6 Black can reply 5 ..., P–Kt3.

5 P–Kt6 ch K–B3

If 5 ..., K–B1, Kt–R4–B5×P.

6 Kt–K5!!

Study No. 4—1941



Black to play; White to win

Now Black may as well resign, as after 6 ..., K×Kt; 7 K×P, or 6 ..., B×Kt; 7 P–R6 White queens a pawn. To any waiting move White continues: 7 P–R6, B×P; 8 Kt–Kt4 ch, and Kt×B.

[1] Published in *Shakhmatnaya Khronika* (*Chess Chronicle*) of the Soviet Society for Cultural Relations, No. 11, November, 1944.

To be fair, I must note that there is another way of winning, also brilliant, but more modest, i.e. 6 Kt–R2! with the same irresistible threat of 7 P–R6.

Now we shall consider the second possibility: 2 ..., B–B6.

2 ... B–B6
3 P–R4 B–Kt7

No good comes of 3 ..., K–K3; 4 K–Kt6. 3 ..., P–Kt3 is bad because of Kt–R2–Kt4–R6 ch.

4 P–R5 B–B6

Here White achieves nothing by 5 P–Kt6 ch, because of 5 ..., K–K3! (of course, not 5 ..., K–B3; 6 P–R6!) followed by K–B4–Kt5. So how should White play?

5 Kt–R4 B–Q7

Otherwise Kt–B5×P is decisive. Now Black parries 6 P–R6 with 6 ..., P–Kt3.

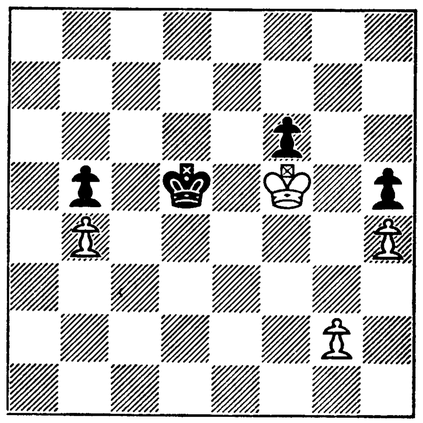
6 P–Kt6 ch K–B3
7 Kt–B5!!

A second surprise, which also decides the issue. After 7 ..., K×Kt; 8 K×P, K–Kt4; 9 K–R7! (but not 9 P–R6, K–R4!; 10 P–R7, B–B6 ch; 11 K–B7, K–R3; and draws!), B–B6; 10 P–R6, and a White Queen is inevitable.

In January, 1945, I played an evening session of simultaneous chess at the Ministry of Aviation Industry. I cannot say that I began auspiciously. The first game was finished in fifteen minutes—alas, my opponent took advantage of an obvious blunder and mated. The atmosphere at once grew tense. The chairman of the chess club announced: 1–nil in favour of the Ministry players. Then the account was squared, but after two hours it was 18–1.

The twentieth and last game drew to its close. Naturally, everybody was following it with deep attention. My opponent proved a tough nut to crack, and when the game reached the position shown in the diagram I had to stop and think.

N. N.



BOTVINNIK

Here White achieves nothing by 1 K×P, K–B5; 2 K–Kt5, K×P; 3 P–Kt4, P×P; 4 K×P, K–B5; or 1 K–Kt6, K–B5; 2 K×RP, K×P; 3 K–Kt4, K–B5, and both players queen a pawn.

If 1 P–Kt4, then 1 ..., P×P; 2 K×KtP, K–K5!; 3 P–R5, P–B4 ch; 4 K–Kt3, K–K6; 5 P–R6, P–B5 ch; 6 K–Kt2, K–K7, with the same result.

None the less, White did play 1 P–Kt4. The game continued: 1 ..., P×P; 2 K×KtP, K–K3 (unfortunately, my opponent did not find 2 ...,

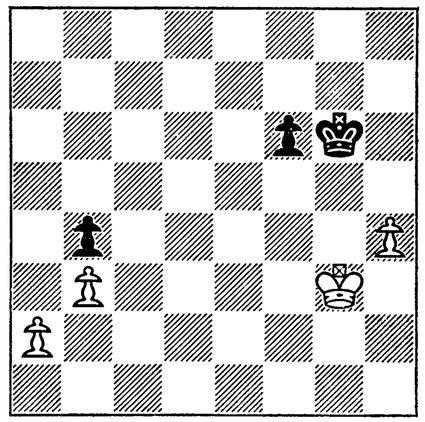
K–K5!); 3 P–R5, K–B2; 4 K–B5, K–Kt2; 6 P–R6 ch, K×P; 7 K×P. White then captured the KtP, and won the game. The onlookers were disappointed.

However, the reader would be wrong in thinking that I played 1 P–Kt4 in the hope that my opponent would make a mistake. I had the following variation in mind: 1 ..., P×P; 2 K×KtP, K–K5; 3 P–R5, P–B4 ch; 4 K–R3!!

This paradoxical move holds the solution to the problem. Now 4 ..., P–B5; 5 P–R6, P–B6; 6 P–R7, P–B7; 7 K–Kt2 leads to a win for White. Black lacks one tempo.

After I had arrived home I set up the position again, and discovered that there is one other subtle road to victory: 1 K–B4! Now there is no defence against 2 P–Kt4, P×P; after which White does not waste time on taking the KKtP but plays 3 P–R5 at once, and wins, as in the game.

VAN SCHELTINGA



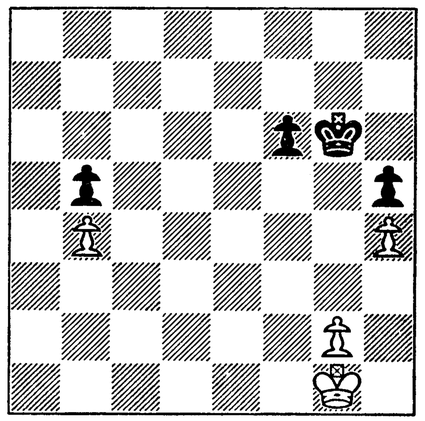
KMOCH

For some time afterwards I was haunted by the thought that I had seen a similar position already somewhere. Reuben Fine's book, *Basic Chess Endings*, came to my aid. The diagram opposite is of an ending which could have arisen in a Kmoch–Van Scheltinga game, at Amsterdam in 1936, and it closely recalls the one that arose in my game.

Analysing this position, Fine pointed out that with Black to move, after 1 ..., K–B4!; 2 K–B3, K–K4!; 3 K–Kt4, K–K5!; 4 P–R5, P–B4 ch; 5 K–Kt3, K–K6; 6 P–R6, P–B5 ch; 7 K–Kt2, K–K7; 8 P–R7, P–B6 ch the game should end in a draw.

I also looked through other books on the endgame, but did not find any similar positions. Then it occurred to me that perhaps the move K–R3 was a "discovery" in this well-studied sphere of simple pawn endings. I at once composed a small study on the theme—my fifth in order of creation.[1]

Study No. 5—1945



White to play and win

1 K–B2	K–B4
2 K–B3	K–K4
3 P–Kt4	P×P ch
4 K×P	K–K5
5 P–R5	P–B4 ch
6 K–R3!!	P–B5
7 P–R6	P–B6
8 P–R7	P–B7
9 K–Kt2	

And White wins.

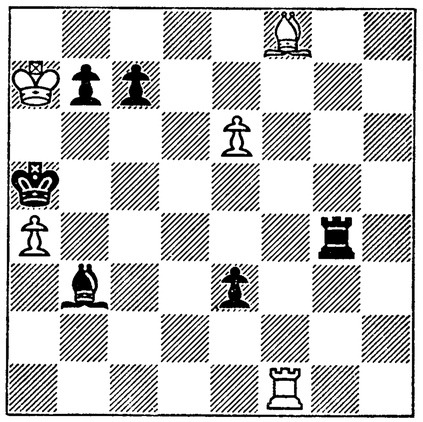
[1] Published in *Shakhmatnaya Khronika* (*Chess Chronicle*) of the Soviet Society for Cultural Relations, No. 3, March, 1945.

The following study, by A. P. Gulaev, won the first prize in a competition devoted to the U.S.S.R. Sixteenth Championship. One has only to look at it to feel antipathy for it: the position of the White King at QR7 is altogether too unnatural.

It is pretty obvious that the King could have reached this square only by "travelling" along the eighth rank, which seems quite incredible to any practical player. The solution is as follows:

1 P–K7	R–K5
2 R–B4	

Study by A. P. GULAEV—1948



White to play and win

If 2 R–B5 ch, then 2 ..., P–B4! (bad is 2 ..., P–Kt4; 3 R×P ch, K×P; 4 R–Kt4 ch!! and so is 2 ..., K×P; 3 R–B4); 3 R×P ch, K×P, and in the author's opinion a draw is inevitable. (4 R–B8, B–B2.)

2 ...	R–K3
3 R–B5 ch	K×P

Now bad is 3 ..., P–B4; 4 R×P ch, K×P; 5 R–B8.

4 R–B6!	R–K4
5 R–B4 ch	B–B5
6 R×B ch	K–Kt6
7 R–B3 ch!	

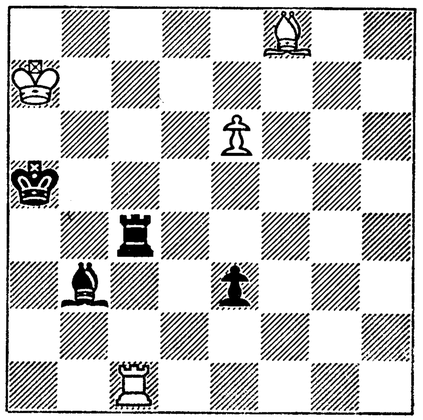
And in ten moves White wins the endgame; Black is lost because of the unfortunate position of his Rook at K4.

Before I studied the solution given I had the impression that the key move was 2 R–B5 ch, and so I began to check Gulaev's observations thoroughly. After several attempts it became clear that in the variation 2 R–B5 ch, P–B4; 3 R×P ch, K×P; White's "quiet" 4 R–B5!! puts Black in a desperate position. He loses both after 4 ..., P–K7; 5 R–B4!, P–K8(Q); 6 P–K8(Q) ch! and after 4 ..., R–K3; 5 R–B6, R–K4; 6 R–B4 ch, B–B5; 7 R×B ch, and 8 R–B8.

The study could have been relegated to the archives if Ragozin had not found a shrewd defence for Black, in the move: 4 ..., B–B2!! After 5 R×B, K–Kt6!!; 6 B–R6, P–K7; 7 B–Q2, P–Kt4!; 8 K–Kt6, P–Kt5; 9 K–B5, P–K8(Q); 10 B×Q, R×B; or 6 R–B4, R–K3; 7 R–Kt4 ch, K–R7 a draw is inevitable.

Having worked quite a lot on this position, I proceeded to compose a study which I think completely reveals its latent possibilities and is more in line with the artistic taste of those fond of the "practical" art of chess.

Study No. 6—1949



White to play and win

Solution:

1 P–K7	R–K5
2 R–B5 ch	K–R5
3 R–B5!!	P–K7

Defeat follows both 3 ..., R–K3; 4 R–B6, R–K4; 5 R–B4 ch, B–B5; 6 R×B ch and 7 R–B8; and also 3 ..., B–B2; 4 R×B, K–Kt6; 5 R–B4 (or 5 B–R6; P–K7; 6 B–Q2), R–K3; 6 R–Kt4 ch and 7 R–Kt8.

4 R–B4 P–K8(Q)
5 P–K8(Q) ch

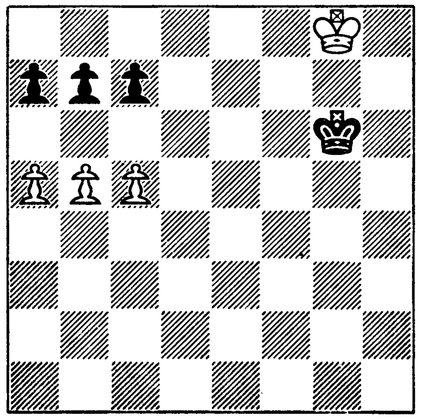
And White wins.

WHAT IS A "COMBINATION"?

In his book *The Middlegame* (1st edition), Romanovsky has defined a "combination" in the following words: "A combination is a variation (or group of variations) in the course of which both sides make forced moves and which ends with an objective advantage for the active side."

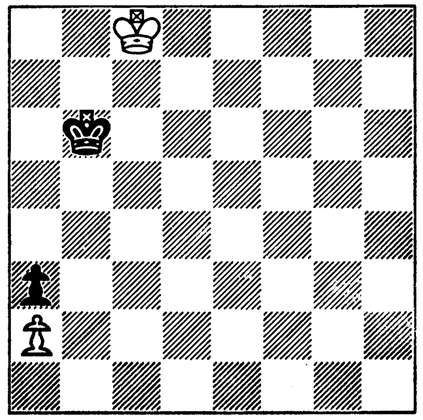
It is certainly true that this formula contains the definition of a "combination," but it also includes something else. For instance, in the well-known position given in the following diagram, after 1 P–Kt6, P×P; 2 P–R6 White gains material superiority by force. Of course, this is a combination; and that follows also from Romanovsky's definition. But in the following position of Grigoriev's, White saves the game by a fine march on the part of his King: K–Q7–K6–B5–K4–Q3–B2.

An old Position



White to play and win

Grigoriev's Position



White to play and draw

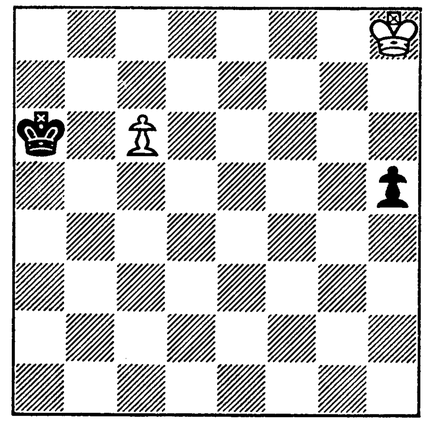
This variation, forced for both sides, ends with a definite achievement on White's part, he gets a draw. According to Romanovsky this is a combination. But of course there is no combination here at all: White carries out not a combination, but a manœuvre.

Take a still more striking example: a well-known study by the Czechoslovakian Grand Master, Réti (See next page). White achieves a draw by a brilliant and forced variation. According to Romanovsky this is a combination. In reality there is no combination here either: it is an example

of a brilliant manœuvre. Consequently Romanovsky's definition does not define "combination."

I have deliberately taken simple instances in order not to complicate the question. One could take more complex examples, but fundamentally it makes no difference.

Réti Study



White to play and draw

What distinguishes a combination from a manœuvre? (Naturally, for the moment we leave unforced manœuvres out of consideration; we shall be dealing with them later.) It is sacrifice. The characteristic feature of a combination is sacrifice. From his very first steps the player is taught that a pawn is equal to a pawn, that a Bishop is equal to three pawns, a Rook stronger than a Knight. But in a combination this correlationship is violated. The customary strength of a piece is to some extent modified, and translated into generally accepted language this connotes sacrifice (sound sacrifice, of course, for we are discussing combination). It is interesting to note that the customary correlations of pieces cease to operate sometimes for a whole sequence of moves, and the transition to this new state of affairs is not gradual, but sharp, in one jump. And similarly in any combination there should be a sudden jump back to the normal state of affairs, when a Bishop is again equal to three pawns, a Queen stronger than a Rook, and so on. If a combination consists of a single move these two jumps are fused; in the "old position," with his 2nd move: P–R6, White ignores the recapture of the pawn and, on the contrary, sacrifices a second pawn. The customary quantitative relationships are violated, there is a sacrifice. But with this selfsame move 2 P–R6 the normal picture is restored, for White forcedly obtains a new Queen, and a Queen is worth more than three pawns. So the two jumps are fused in one move.

We have digressed a little. Then what is a combination? A combination is a forced variation with sacrifice. It seems to me that this is both an exact and a simple definition. A combination must not be confused with a forced manœuvre. There are two kinds of manœuvres: positional, when the opponent's moves are not forced, and forced (see Réti's study, for an example). Then what is the difference between a combination and a forced manœuvre? A forced manœuvre is a forced variation without sacrifice.

The definition of a positional manœuvre is obvious: it is the transfer of a piece or a group of pieces to a different position. What practical conclusions can be drawn from these observations? Mainly terminological ones.

In commentaries the expression "fine combination" is frequently used when there has been no sacrifice whatever; or some combination is said to be one of many moves, when in reality it has lasted not more than two moves. For instance, in my game against Capablanca at Amsterdam in 1938, the combination ended in the course of two moves (30 B–R3, and 31 Kt–R5 ch); all the rest was a forced manœuvre.[1]

Our problem composers regularly call those manœuvres which they carry out in their problems, "combinations." In my view this is incorrect.

Some masters like to call themselves players "of a combinative style."

Well, now there is an objective means of testing such statements.

[1] See diagram after Black's 29th move, Game No. 59, p. 156.

RESULTS IN TOURNAMENTS AND MATCHES

Year	Place	Tournament	Position Obtained and Points		Won	Lost	Drawn	No. of Games
1923	Leningrad	School Championship	App. 10th out of 16.					
1924	,,	,, ,,	1	5	5	1	—	6
1924	,,	Non-category	1	11½	11	1	1	13
1924	,,	2B and 3rd Category	1	8½	7	1	3	11
1924	,,	2A Category	App. 50%. Tournament unfinished.					
1925	,,	2A and 1B Categories	1	10	10	1	—	11
1925	,,	1st Category	3	7½	7	3	1	11
1925	,,	,, ,,	App. 80%. Tournament unfinished.					
1926	,,	Leningrad Championship, Semi-finals	1	11½	11	—	1	12
1926	,,	Leningrad Championship	2–3	7	6	1	2	9
1926	,,	N.W. Provincial Semi-finals	2–3	9	8	1	2	11
1926	,,	N.W. Provincial Championship	3	6½	4	1	5	10
1927	,,	Tournament of "Six"	2	7½	6	1	3	10
1927	Moscow	U.S.S.R. Vth Championship	5–6	12½	9	4	7	20
1928	Leningrad	Regional Metal-Workers' Committee Championship	1	8½	7	1	3	11
1929	,,	Regional Committee of Educational Workers' Championship	1	11½	9	—	5	14
1929	Odessa	U.S.S.R. Quarter-Finals, VIth Championship	1	7	6	—	2	8
1929	,,	U.S.S.R. Semi-finals, VIth Championship	3–4	2½	2	2	1	5
1930	Leningrad	Masters' Tournament	1	6½	6	1	1	8
1931	,,	Leningrad Championship	1	14	12	1	4	17
1931	Moscow	U.S.S.R. Semi-finals, VIIth Championship	2	6½	6	2	1	9
1931	,,	VIIth U.S.S.R. Championship	1	13½	12	2	3	17
1932	Leningrad	Leningrad Championship	1	10	9	—	2	11
1932	,,	Masters' Tournament in House of Scientists	1	7	6	2	2	10
1933	,,	Masters' Tournament	1–2	10	7	—	6	13
1933	Leningrad	U.S.S.R. VIIIth Championship	1	14	11	2	6	19
1933	Moscow–Leningrad	Match with Flohr	Drawn 6		2	2	8	12
1934	Leningrad	Tournament with Euwe playing	1	7½	5	1	5	11

RESULTS CONTINUED

Year	Place	Tournament	Position Obtained and Points		Won	Lost	Drawn	No. of Games
1934	Hastings	International Tournament	5–6	5	3	2	4	9
1935	Moscow	2nd International Tournament	1–2	13	9	2	8	19
1936	,,	3rd International Tournament	2	12	7	1	10	18
1936	Nottingham	International Tournament	1–2	10	6	—	8	14
1937	Moscow–Leningrad	Match with Levenfish	Drawn	6½	5	5	3	13
1938	Leningrad	U.S.S.R. XIth Championship, Semi-finals	1	14	12	1	4	17
1938	Amsterdam	International Tournament	3	7½	3	2	9	14
1939	Leningrad	U.S.S.R. XIth Championship	1	12½	8	—	9	17
1940	Leningrad	Match with Ragozin	Won	8½	5	—	7	12
1940	Moscow	U.S.S.R. XIIth Championship	5–6	11½	8	4	7	19
1941	Leningrad–Moscow	Match-Tournament for Absolute Champion	1	13½	9	2	9	20
1943	Sverdlovsk	Masters' Tournament	1	10½	7	—	7	14
1943	Moscow	Moscow Championship	1	13½	12	1	3	16
1944	,,	U.S.S.R. XIIIth Championship	1	12½	11	2	3	16
1945	,,	U.S.S.R. XIVth Championship	1	15	13	—	4	17
1946	Groningen	International Tournament	1	14½	13	3	3	19
1947	Moscow	Tournament in Memory of Tchigorin	1	11	8	1	6	15
1948	Hague–Moscow	World Championship	1	14	10	2	8	20
					+333	−59	=186	578

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